Healthy Ways to Add Calories

These high-calorie foods below can help you gain weight. Most are unsaturated (healthy) fats, which can protect against heart disease.

Oils (olive, canola, avocado)
- Add to vegetables, meat, pasta, tomato sauce, salads, or dip for bread.

Nuts and Nut Butters (almonds, walnuts, cashews, tahini, and natural peanut butter)
- Add to trail mix or cereals, sprinkle onto salads or yogurt, spread on crackers, fruit, pancakes, and add to smoothies

Fatty Fish (tuna, salmon, halibut, sardines, mackerel, and trout)
- Add to sandwiches, pasta, rice, salads, eat with crackers

Avocados and Olives
- Add to sandwiches, salads, soups, casseroles, eggs, pastas, and crackers

Seeds and Grains (wheat germ, oat bran, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, chia seeds, sesame seeds, hemp seeds, and ground flaxseed)
- Add to hot or cold cereals, fruit, yogurt, stir fry dishes, vegetables, casseroles, salads

Sauces, dressings, gravies and condiments (pesto, alfredo, mayonnaise, tartar sauce, curry, ranch dressing, Caesar dressing)
- Add to meats, vegetables, pasta, fish, casseroles, rice, and potatoes

Dry milk powder
- Add to milk, milkshakes, smoothies, casseroles, mashed potatoes, soups, eggs, hot cereal, puddings and pancake batter

Butter
- Add to potatoes, vegetables, hot cereals, soups, noodles, sauces

Dried Fruit (raisins, cranberries, dates, and apricots)
- Add to sweeten hot or cold cereals, salads, yogurt

Snack or Meal Ideas	Calories (kcal)	Protein (g)
1 cup Greek yogurt with 1 oz. granola and 1 oz cashews	416	29
Smoothie made with ½ cup whole milk Greek yogurt, 1 banana small, 1 cup whole milk, 1 scoop (28g) whey protein, and 1 Tbsp. natural peanut butter	573	46
Bagel with 2 Tbsp. cream cheese and 1 Tbsp. jelly	623	13.2
1 cup cooked oatmeal made with 1 cup whole milk, 2 tsp. honey, 1 banana and ½ cup dried cranberries	836	19
Egg salad sandwich made with 2 hardboiled eggs, 2 Tbsp mayonnaise on wheat bread	512	18.6
2 pieces wheat bread, 2 tbsp natural peanut butter, 1 small banana	456	14
Turkey sandwich (3oz meat) with ½ cup avocado and 1 Tbsp mayonnaise	298	17
1 cup 2% cottage cheese with ¼ cup dried fruit (cranberries, raisins, or apricots), ¼ cup nuts	513	35
Trail mix: 1 oz. almonds and walnuts, ¼ cup raisins, and 1/2 cup granola	771	21
1 cup pasta, ¼ cup pesto, 3 oz grilled chicken	535	30
1 cup turkey chili with beans over a baked potato with 1 oz shredded cheddar cheese, 2 tbsp sour cream	389	24
1 cup creamy tomato soup, ½ cup croutons, 1 oz cheddar cheese	324	13
2 graham cracker squares with 2 Tbsp. natural peanut butter and 1 cup whole milk	415	16
1 oz dark chocolate, 1 cup strawberries, 1 oz cashews	373	8.4

Your calorie needs are _____ calories per day.
Your protein needs are _____ grams protein per day.

Contact your local VA Dietitian for more information.