



### **How much do I need to eat to put on weight?**

It is common that people who suffer from some types of eating disorders are required to put on weight for medical reasons. As stated elsewhere, BodyMatters does NOT endorse calorie counting. However, given that many people who suffer from eating disorders have distorted nutritional information, we believe there is great value in re-educating and providing guidelines for recovery. This can assist in managing expectations and anxiety around what is, for many, an overwhelming experience.

When eating for weight gain, we suggest planning (Refer to handout “**Planning for Changes in Eating**”). We also recommend that you do so under the guidance of an eating disorder specialist. Needless to say, if you are required to gain weight you will need to eat additional calories to what you eat simply to maintain your body weight. (Refer to handout “**How Much Should I Be Eating**”).

Generally speaking, every 1kg of weight gain needs about 7000 additional calories [*or 29 300 kilojoules*]. So to gain 1kg in a week, you would need to eat your Daily Energy Expenditure (DEE) (calculated on the How Much Should I Be Eating Handout) plus a further 1000 calories [*or 4 190 kilojoules*] every day. In outpatient settings most people aim to gain about 0.5 kg per week. This means that they need to eat their DEE plus 500 calories [*or 2 100 kilojoules*] per day.

Approximate examples of what would need to be consumed on a daily basis (over and above a maintenance diet) for roughly 0.5kg weight gain per week:

- 10 Jatz crackers + ¼ tub ricotta cheese + 1/3 cup nuts + a handful of strawberries or grapes; OR
- 2 tubs of regular yoghurt; OR
- 3 sweet biscuits + 55g bar of Cadbury Dairy Milk chocolate; OR
- 2 donuts; OR
- 2 cups of cornflakes with a generous serve of full cream milk + 2 small bananas; OR
- 3 sushi rolls + 5 corn things with cream cheese spread + a glass of orange juice.

*Acknowledgement: This document has been developed from resources sourced on [www.eatingresearch.com](http://www.eatingresearch.com), developed by Prof Janet Treasure*