GAINING MUSCLE

An appropriate body composition for your sport may mean that at times you need to gain muscle mass. It’s important to be realistic with your expectations about the effort and time it takes to gain good quality mass. Gains of 0.25 – 0.5kgs per week are possible with the right training and nutrition plan. Gaining weight at a faster rate than this may mean that you are gaining fat mass at the same time, which is usually not the goal for a healthy athlete. Preseason is often the best time to concentrate on gaining muscle mass as you can generally fit more workouts in and may have more time to shop, cook and prepare your food. The following provides some information for those seeking to gain mass.

Tips

1) Track your intake.
   Do you have any idea what you eat in a day? Where are the gaps? Are you missing meals on rest days? These gaps can all be used as opportunities to increase your calorie intake. See the Calculating Energy requirements information sheet to calculate your calorie goal. Remember, the quality of the calories you eat is as important as the total amount.

2) Recover: Have a recovery food or beverage immediately after every workout.
   The combination of increased amino acids (protein) and increased blood flow promotes better muscle protein growth and, eating both protein & carbohydrate at the same time, causes greater total muscle protein growth than eating either alone. (See recipes and ideas below)

3) You need protein but don’t forget about carbohydrate and fats.
   The maximum amount of protein that your body can use efficiently in one day is approximately 2g protein per kg body weight. So if you weigh 100kg (220lbs), then you can have up to 150 - 200g protein in a day. Above this, very little protein will be absorbed so the extra calories you need will come from healthy carbohydrates and fats.

4) Add one extra meal or two extra snacks every day.
   Aim to include an extra 400-500 Calories per day e.g. sandwich and chocolate milk, 1/2 cup trail mix, bowl of granola with milk, bagel with peanut butter, or a smoothie.

5) Eat or drink every 2-3 hours.
   Spread your protein intake out. Including protein at all meals and snacks ensures a continuous supply of amino acids to the muscle. Keep in mind that eating more than approx. 30 grams per meal (1 large chicken breast) may not increase muscle growth because your body can only absorb so much at once, so spread it out to get maximum value from the protein you are eating.

6) Eat until you are full.
   Be careful not to fill up on liquids at mealtimes. You may choose not to drink until you are finished your meal and choose higher calorie fluids – e.g. fruit juice or milk.

7) Avoid or limit alcohol.
   Alcohol in large quantities (more than 2-3 standard drinks for males, 1-2 for females per day) is damaging to the body and muscles and may cause changes in appetite resulting in overall reduced calorie intake.

8) Set realistic goals.
   0.25kg per week is ideal as rapid weight gain may be associated with fat deposition or water retention.

9) Supplementation.
   Creatine supplementation may be helpful for weight gain. It will not make up for lack of calories in your diet so make sure all the steps above have been implemented before considering this. Please seek advice from your Sport Dietitian before using supplementation.

10) Sleep.
    In order to allow your muscles to grow and recover, sleep is essential. Aim for 7 – 8 hours of sleep per night, or more when training volume is particularly high.
IDEAS AND RECIPES

Any meal
• Add a calorie containing drink to each meal or snack – hot or cold chocolate milk, real fruit juices (not concentrate), plain milk etc.
• Add skimmed milk powder to milk
• Use whole (3.5%) milk in place of regular milk

Breakfast
• Add nuts, seeds and dried fruit to cereal
• Add nut butter to toast/oats/yogurt
• Add chia seeds, hemp and flax seeds to overnight oats or yogurt
• Cook eggs in coconut or olive oil
• Eat eggs on toast with avocado
• Eat bread with seeds and nuts in it
• Add honey to cereal, yogurt and oats
• Add mashed or sliced banana to cereal

Lunch and dinner
• Add dried fruit, nuts or seeds to rice, pasta and salads
• Add olive oil based dressings to salads
• Use avocado and hummus in sandwiches, wraps, salads, smoothies
• Add cheese to dishes or sandwiches
• Add butter to mash potato
• Add avocado or coconut oil to quinoa or bulgur wheat
• Add boiled egg to dishes or fried egg to steaks, stir fries etc.
• Add tofu to stir fries along with meat
• Choose oily fish (e.g. salmon) rather than white fish

Smoothies
• Add coconut milk or flavoured almond milk to smoothies
• Add chia seeds, hemp seeds, flax seeds, oats
• Add peanut butter or honey
• Add banana
• Use 4% yogurt

Have “dessert” after lunch or dinner
• Rice pudding with jam or peanut butter
• Homemade banana bread
• Granola bar
• Yogurt, fruit, granola, nuts
• Protein bar
• Smoothie
SNACK IDEAS

At home
- Tuna melt on whole-wheat bagel
- Baked potato with cheese and a glass of milk
- Granola with milk or yogurt, nuts, seeds and dried fruit
- Smoothie
- Protein filled sandwich on whole or sprouted grain bread
- Soup with added grated cheese

Portable
- Tuna or salmon pouch with crackers or pitta bread
- Trail mix with dried fruit and nuts
- Cliff Bar, Elevate Me Bar, Nakd bar, Nature Valley bar etc. + banana
- Whole wheat pita or crackers or pretzels and hummus or guacamole
- Overnight oats with fruit, yogurt, nuts, seeds, honey, seeds
- Pear/apple slices and sharp cheddar or nut butter
- Crackers and cheese
- Chocolate milk or regular milk with beef jerky
- Meal replacement shakes (Ensure, Boost)
- Coconut date rolls or fig newton’s
- Protein box from grocery store
- Footlong with avocado, meat and cheese

RECIPE IDEAS

Peanut butter shake
(1 serving)
¾ cup frozen yogurt
½ cup homogenized milk
¼ cup skim milk powder
2 Tbsp Peanut butter
Combine all together and blend in blender

Super shake
1 cup frozen yogurt
1 cup homogenized milk
1 pkg Nestle Carnation Breakfast Anytime®
Mix all together and blend in a blender

Yogurt Shake
¼ cup plain 2% yogurt
¼ cup skim milk powder
½ cup 100% fruit juice
1 tbsp sugar or honey
Mix all together

Trail Mix Mixture
1 cup sunflower seeds
½ cup raisins
1 cup coconut, shredded
½ cup peanuts
½ cup dates, chopped
½ cup almonds
½ cup brazil nuts
Mix all ingredients together and store in an airtight container. Can be made with other types of nuts and fruit