

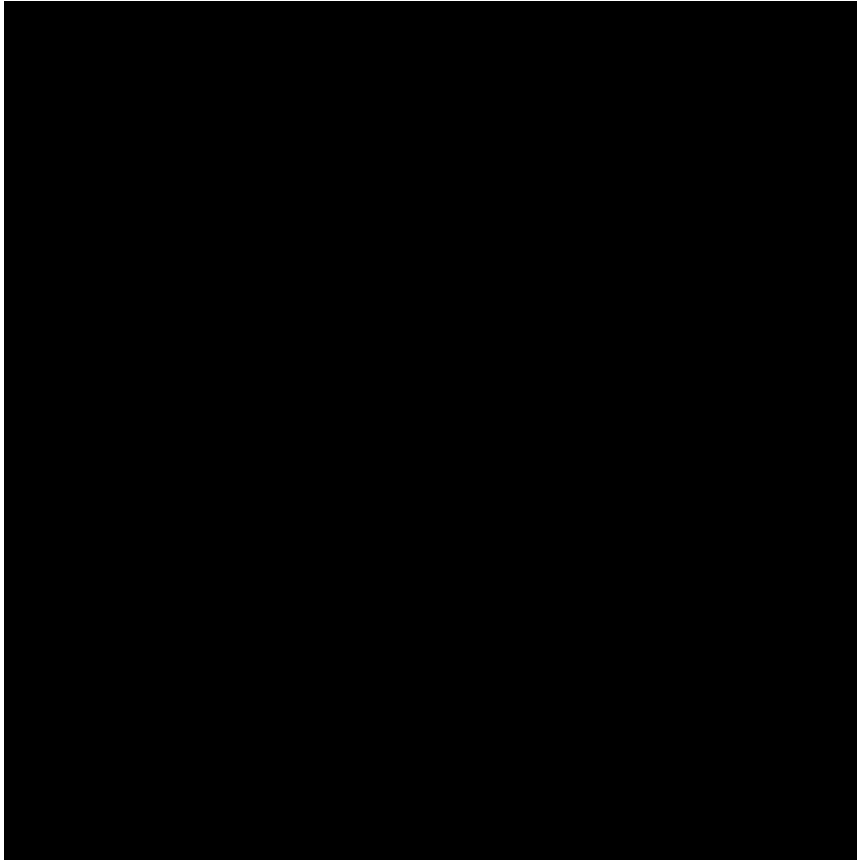
Any unhealthy body weight, whether over or under, is cause for concern. While being underweight isn't necessarily a health problem, it can lead to impaired immune function, increased risk of infections, osteoporosis, and fractures, as well as fertility issues in some cases.

As always, the best course of action is to consult a doctor for guidance. Unhealthy weight loss can result from serious conditions like eating disorders, thyroid problems, celiac disease, diabetes, or infections.

If you're looking to gain some pounds because you're underweight, be sure to do so in a manner that gets you the right balance of muscle mass and subcutaneous fat. There are effective ways to pick up more weight without recourse to unhealthy foods or practices.

Read on to learn about 4 healthy ways to gain weight if you're underweight.

Protein is your best bet for safe weight gain. This important nutrient is famously known as the building block of the muscles, but it's also vital for healthy skin, bone, and tissues. Protein helps you gain muscle mass instead of just fat from the calories you intake. Add protein to your diet by eating lots of meat, eggs, and fish. Dairy products like milk, cottage cheese, and Greek yogurt also contain high amounts of protein. Vegans can opt for oats, quinoa, lentils, broccoli, and nuts like almonds, pistachios, and cashews.



Foods high in carbohydrates and fats are a quick fix for underweight bodies. The key is to choose the right carbs and fats that add, not detract, to your health. Choose nutritious carbs like whole grains and brown rice and good fats like salmon, avocado, nuts, and cheese. Snack wisely on healthy options like trail mix, hummus, and peanut butter if you're underweight and want to change it. Just make sure to round it off with a diverse selection of [fruit](#) and [vegetables](#) each day so that you represent each of the five main food groups in your meals.

Throw out the processed and prepackaged stuff, and turn your attention to single-ingredient foods. These whole foods contain a high amount of calories relative to their weight. Examples include hearty foods like meat, high-fat dairy, whole grains, and tubers like potatoes and yams. Dried fruits, dark chocolate, whole milk, and extra virgin olive oil are also great options. An energy-dense diet will leave you feeling full and safely working on your underweight issue in no time.

Build up your muscles by lifting heavy, gradually increasing the weight and volume as you progress. This will improve your strength and keep you from only putting on fat. Try to focus on a weight-lifting regime and leave off on cardio, as it tends to burn calories fast and has a leaning effect on the body. Those new to training may want to consider taking classes or working with a qualified personal trainer for guidance and safety. You should also speak with a doctor if you have any medical issue that needs to be worked around.

