

Client Name _____ Date _____

RD/DTR _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Tips for Caring for Underweight Children

Label Reading Tips

- Check for expiration, “use by,” and “sell by” dates. Do not use foods after these dates have passed.
- Look at the serving size in the Nutrition Facts and compare it with the portion your child usually eats. All the nutrition information on the label will be for the portion given as 1 serving.
- Understand that “light” or “lite” does not always mean a food is low in calories, fat, sugar, or salt. Instead, the food may be light in color, taste, or texture. Read the Nutrition Facts and ingredients lists for accurate information.
- Compare labels on similar foods. For your underweight child, choose products that are higher in calories and avoid sugar-free and fat-free foods.



Shopping Tips

- Make a shopping list of healthy foods. Include food items that will help to add calories to your child’s diet.
- For general health, choose fresh foods more often. Choose prepared foods less often.
- Involve your child in planning meals, making grocery lists, grocery shopping, and meal preparation.
- Shop when you have time to think (leave young children at home if possible).
- Some children eat more if they can help plan, shop, and prepare meals. Include your child if it will help him/her eat more!
- Never buy food that appears spoiled or is past its sell-by or use-by date.
- Don’t buy dented cans or damaged food products.

Cooking Tips to Add Calories

- Choose cooking methods that use added fats and oils, such as frying or sautéing.
- Top foods with creamed sauces and dressings.
- Add cheese to potatoes, vegetables, sandwiches, soups, and entrées.
- Add ground or chopped meats to casseroles and soups.
- Grind nuts and add them to breading or sprinkle on top of pudding. Add chopped nuts to fruit salads.

- Mash avocado and mix it into salsa. Serve this dip with tortilla chips.
- Add butter, oil, or margarine to breads, muffins, meats, vegetables, pastas, and rice. Warming foods will help them soak up more butter or margarine.

Food Safety Tips

Protect your underweight child from problems with diarrhea and vomiting by keeping the kitchen clean!

- Wash your hands before preparing food and after handling raw meat, poultry, fish, seafood, or eggs.
- Wash bowls, cutting surfaces, knives and other utensils after they come in contact with raw meat, poultry, fish, seafood, or eggs.
- Keep cold foods cold (45 degrees Fahrenheit or colder) and keep hot foods hot (165 degrees Fahrenheit or hotter).
- Put food away right after shopping and after meals.
- Cook meats until they are done. Check by using a meat thermometer.
 - Meat is done when its temperature is 160 degrees Fahrenheit.
 - Chicken needs to be cooked to a temperature of 170 degrees Fahrenheit.
 - Seafood should be heated to 145 degrees Fahrenheit, and precooked seafood should be heated to 165 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Cook eggs until the egg white is solid and the yolk starts to thicken.
- Avoid unpasteurized milk and dairy foods.
- Heat cold cuts, hot dogs, deli meats, and sausages to steaming before serving.
- Wash raw fruits and vegetables well. Avoid raw sprouts.
- Never thaw food on the kitchen counter. Thaw food in the refrigerator or microwave. Foods thawed in the microwave should be cooked immediately.

Notes: