

High protein and high kilojoule smoothies

Dietitian Meagan Atcheson shares power play ingredients to make a high protein and high kilojoule smoothie.

When you have cancer, your body may need extra kilojoules and protein. But eating challenges, such as difficulty swallowing, loss of appetite, nausea, diarrhoea, or fatigue, can make eating difficult.

The key is to make every bite count by eating high protein and high kilojoule foods. Smoothies and nutritional shakes, which can be easier to consume than solid food, can serve as the nutrients your body needs.

Please note: the ingredients in nutritional shakes aren't for everyone, especially people with diabetes or people with kidney issues. It's always best to speak to a registered dietitian first.

Top smoothie items to have on hand

- Blender, storage containers, strainer (make in advance and store in fridge).
- Emergency smoothie options for last minute or on-the-go.
- Instant breakfast, protein powder or nutritional shakes (Lifegain Advanced Nutritional Supplement).
- Frozen fruit and veg, tinned fruit.

The best way to keep your nutrition, kilojoules, and protein up is to vary your diet. So, mix it up and try different things.

High kilojoule add-ins for weight gain

- Powdered milk, full cream milk, yoghurt, ice cream
- Coconut yoghurt, coconut milk (not high in protein but high in fat and kilojoules)
- Protein powder
- Honey
- Oats
- Instant breakfast cereals, high protein cereal, high protein oats
- Nutritional shakes and sip drinks
- Avocado, peanut butter, seeds, nuts
- Cottage cheese

The benefits

- The protein powder will add an extra boost of protein if needed.
- Honey will add sweetness along with kilojoules.
- Oats will add some extra fibre. You can use powdered oats, soak oats in liquid 10 – 20 minutes before blending, or even use raw oats if you don't mind the texture (they will get ground and softer when you blend).
- Nuts and seeds are high in heart healthy fats. This is a great option if you have a good blender. If you don't have the strongest blender and don't want too much texture, use powdered nuts and seeds or pre-made nut and seed butters.

Nuts and seeds to add

Peanut butter, almond butter, walnuts, almonds, flax seed, chia seed.

Flax and chia seeds are high in omega 3 fats. Peanut butter is super high in kilojoules and a tasty addition to a smoothie, depending on the ingredients.

Vegetables to add

Avocados, carrots, spinach, kale. Add one to two veggies per day.

Avocados have the highest kilojoule option. They are high in heart healthy fats and will give a creamy taste to any smoothie. Carrots add a hint of sweetness while greens often have a minimal taste but add a nutrient boost.

Fruits to add

Strawberries, bananas, pineapple, apple, orange, berries. Add one to two fruits per day.

Fruits can be moderately high in kilojoules but are also jam-packed with vitamins and minerals.

The banana is a great high-kilojoule option. There are around 418.4 kilojoules in a medium-sized banana. It will give some creaminess to a smoothie and tastes good.

Liquids to add

All smoothies need liquid to get them blended up and ready to drink. We don't want to add water to high kilojoule smoothies. Water has no kilojoules. We want to ensure every ingredient that goes into the blender is high in kilojoules.

- Whole milk
- Yoghurt
- High protein milk
- Ice cream
- Fruit juice

You can freeze juice in an ice cube tray and use them for your smoothies. It will be jam-packed with kilojoules.

Note: almond and rice milk have no protein and very minimal kilojoules.

Coconut Smoothie

1 banana
1 cup apple juice
1 cup coconut milk
2 scoops Lifegain Advanced Nutritional Supplement Vanilla

Green Smoothie

1 avocado
1 scoop protein powder
1 cup fruit
½ apple
1 cup baby spinach
1 cup apple juice



Meet the expert

Meagan Atcheson is a registered dietitian who focuses specifically in oncology. She is a plant-centric foodie who promotes a nourishing approach to health and wellness using evidence-based research and guidelines only.

Visit buddiesforlife.co.za for more smoothie recipes