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## What is a calorie count?

A calorie count is a written log (or piece of paper) that lists everything your child eats and drinks during their hospital stay. It is used to help determine the type of food they eat and the amount of calories and protein they get each day and night.

## Why is my child on a calorie count?

Your child's doctor and nutritionist need to know how much they are eating and drinking in the hospital. This helps them know whether your child is getting the right amount of nutrition to:

- Grow as expected.
- Gain or maintain weight.
- Have the needed energy and protein for healing.

## What do I do?

- After meals and snacks, write down **everything** your child ate and drank on the calorie count worksheets on pages 2 to 4.
  - Please use a new sheet for each day.
  - Include the type and amount of food or drink.
  - Some examples are:
    - Half of a hamburger on a bun
    - 4 ounces of Pediasure
    - 1 cup of green beans
- Also write down the food and drinks they eat from home or an outside restaurant.
- Please talk with your child's nurse or nutritionist if you need help or have questions.

## How long will my child be on a calorie count?

Most calorie counts last for 3 days. You may be asked to keep writing down what your child eats and drinks for longer than 3 days if needed.

## How do I know if my child is eating the right amount of food?

Your child's nutritionist can talk with you about how much food your child should eat and drink to give them the energy and protein they need. Please ask to talk with your child's nutritionist if you want to learn more about the type and amount of food that is best for your child.

**This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.**

**In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.**





