

Benefits of Protein

Protein is one of the three main building blocks of food, along with carbohydrate and fat. It plays many important roles in your body.

Build. Throughout life, you need protein to build cells, tissues, and muscles. During times of growth, such as infancy, childhood, and pregnancy, protein is especially important.

Repair. Protein helps your body heal cuts and wounds.

Protect. Protein helps your immune system build antibodies that protect you from disease.

Appetite control: Protein helps us feel more satisfied after a meal or snack. We are less hungry and our drive to overeat is lessened when we have enough protein in meals and snacks. Include good sources of protein in every meal and snack. It is especially important to have adequate protein at breakfast – Don't skip this important meal.

How Much Protein Do You Need?

People who are trying to lose weight and maintain once they reach goal weight do better if they boost their protein intake. Ask your doctor if you need to restrict protein for

any reason. If you do not have to restrict protein intake, then consider your RDA level (the lower protein intake level listed in the chart) as your minimum protein intake.

Current Body Weight	Protein Intake (.8 -1.1 g/kg body weight)
150 lbs	55 -75 grams*
175 lbs	65-90 grams*
200 lbs	75*-100 grams
225 lbs	85*-110 grams
250 lbs	90*-125 grams
275 lbs	100-135 grams
300 lbs	110-150 grams
350 lbs	125-175 grams
400 lbs	145-200 grams

How much protein is safe?

- Many people find that 100 grams or more of protein per day helps them lose weight. Please ask your doctor if that level of protein is appropriate for you.

Does Eating Extra Protein Make you Stronger?

Eating extra protein does not directly increase the size or strength of your muscles. The amount of protein in a typical diet is usually enough to build cells and tissues.

Going Lean with Protein

Some foods with protein are high in saturated fat. Eating too much saturated fat can increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. To avoid saturated fat, it is important to choose low-fat (lean) protein foods. Here are some tips to help you get enough lean protein while limiting saturated fat.

- Poultry: remove skin from chicken or turkey before eating
- Fish and seafood: all types provide an excellent source of lean protein but avoid deep-fat fried
- Red meat: choose lean cuts of beef, such as loin, sirloin, round, and chuck. Trim visible fat. Choose ground beef 90% lean or greater.
- Broil, grill, microwave, roast, poach, or boil meats instead of frying.
- Cook dried beans, peas, and lentils without adding animal fats, like lard, bacon or ham hocks.
- Lunchmeats: choose lean lunchmeats, such as turkey, ham*, and roast beef. Avoid bologna, salami, sausage, and other high-fat, processed meats.

**high in sodium*

Lean, High Protein Foods

Food	Serving Size	Protein (grams)	Calories
Lean Roast beef	3 oz	23 g	159
Clams	3 oz	22 g	126
Greek Yogurt, plain, nonfat	1 cup	22 g	120
Salmon	3 oz	20 g	118
Skinless Chicken Breast	3 oz	20 g	90
Seitan	3 oz	18 g	90
Oysters	3 oz	12 g	115
Tempeh	3 oz	15 g	165
2% Cottage Cheese	½ cup	14 g	90
Veggie Burger	1 patty 2.5 oz	13 g	70
Lentils	½ cup cooked	9 g	115
Dried beans and peas	½ cup cooked	8 g	110
Non-fat milk	8 oz	8 g	80
Tofu, firm	3 oz	14 g	120
Low fat string cheese	1 piece (21g)	6 g	60
Egg, large	1	6	80
Light Vanilla Soy milk	1 cup	6 g	70

What about Nuts & Seeds?

Nuts, seeds and their pastes/spreads (e.g. hummus, tahini, peanut butter) are good sources of protein but much higher in calories. Use these foods cautiously and budget for the high caloric cost. 1 oz. of most nuts or seeds has less than 10 g protein and more than 150 calories.