

Tips for Adding Protein

Protein rich foods include all food made from seafood, meat, poultry, eggs, beans, peas, lentils, soy products, and nuts and seeds. Healthy adults need variety of protein in their diet. How much of protein foods to eat depends on your age, sex, height, weight, physical activity, and overall calorie needs. The Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs) recommend 0.8 grams protein per kilogram of body weight, or 0.36 grams of protein per pound of body weight for healthy adults. For example, a 150-pound adult will require minimum 55 grams of protein per day. If you're having orthopedic surgery, you will need much more protein in your diet to fuel your recovery. For example, a 150- pound adult needing orthopedic surgery may require approximately ~80-100 grams of protein per day. Talk to your doctor or a Dietitian on your individualized protein requirements.

1. Vary your protein food choices. Include beans, peas, nuts, soy, and seafood as main dishes.
2. Choose seafood twice a week, such as salmon and tuna that are higher in healthy oils.
3. Select lean meat and poultry. Remove skin from poultry and trim and drain fat from meat.
4. Enjoy eggs as they can be an inexpensive protein option.
5. Eat plant protein foods more often such as beans, peas (kidney, pinto, black, chickpeas, hummus), and soy products.
6. Consider nuts and seeds. They are a concentrated source of calories, so eat small portions to keep calories in check.
7. Keep it healthy by grilling, broiling, roasting, or baking.

If you are struggling with not consuming enough protein, below are some practical tips on how to add protein rich foods into your diet

Food	Tips
Beans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook and use dried peas, beans, and tofu in soups or add to casseroles, pastas, and grain dishes that also contain cheese or meat • <i>¼ cup cooked beans, peas, lentils provides ~ 7 grams of protein.</i>
Commercial Protein Supplements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use nutritional supplements or protein powder sold at pharmacies and grocery stores • Use protein powder in milk drinks and desserts, such as pudding • Mix with ice cream, milk, and fruit or other flavorings for a high-protein milkshake • <i>Aim for 20-30 grams of protein per serving</i>
Cottage Cheese or Ricotta Cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix with fruits and vegetables • Add to casseroles, spaghetti, noodles, or egg dishes such as omelets, and scrambled eggs • Use gelatin, pudding-type desserts, cheesecake, and pancake or waffle batter • <i>¼ cup cottage cheese provides ~ 7 grams of protein</i>
Eggs, Egg whites, and Egg Yolks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add chopped, hard-cooked eggs to salads and dressings, vegetables, and casseroles. • Beat eggs into mashed potatoes, vegetable purees, and sauces

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add extra egg whites to quiches, scrambled eggs, custards, puddings, pancake batter, or French toast batter • <i>1 egg provides ~ 7 grams of protein</i>
Hard or Semi-Soft Cheese (Cheddar, Jack)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melt on sandwiches, bread, muffins, tortillas, hamburgers, meats or fish, vegetables, and eggs. • Grate and add to soups, sauces, casseroles, vegetable dishes, potatoes, rice noodles, or meatloaf • Serve as a snack with crackers. • <i>1 ounce cheese provides ~ 7 grams of protein</i>
Ice cream, Yogurt, and Frozen Yogurt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add ice cream to milk drinks such as milkshakes • Use yogurt as a dip for fruits, vegetables, or chips • Use yogurt in place of sour cream in casseroles • <i>Aim to include Greek yogurt as it provides more protein compared to regular yogurt.</i>
Meat and Fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add chopped, cooked meat or fish to vegetables, salads, casseroles, soups, and sauces. • Use in omelets, quiches, and sandwich fillings • Add to stuffed baked potatoes • Add pureed meat to soups • <i>1 ounce of meat, poultry, or fish provides ~ 7 grams of protein</i>
Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use in beverages and in cooking • Use in preparing foods, such as hot cereal, soups, hot chocolate or pudding • Add cream sauces to vegetable and other dishes • Use evaporated milk, evaporated skim milk, or sweetened condensed milk instead of milk or water in recipes • <i>1 cup of milk provides ~ 8 grams of protein</i>
Nonfat Dry Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add to yogurt and milk drinks • Add to scrambled eggs and mashed potatoes • <i>Adding 1/3 cup of nonfat dry milk powdered milk to each cup of regular milk will provide "double strength" milk</i>
Nuts, Seeds, and Wheat Germ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add to casseroles, breads, muffins, pancakes, cookies, and waffles • Sprinkle on fruit, cereal, ice cream, yogurt, vegetables, salads, and toast as a crunchy topping • Use in place of breadcrumbs • Roll banana in chopped nuts • <i>¼ cup nuts or seeds provides ~ 7 grams of protein</i>
Peanut Butter or nut butters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread on sandwiches, toast, muffins, crackers, waffles, pancakes, and fruit slices • Use as a dip for raw vegetables, such as carrots, cauliflower, and celery • Blend with milk drinks, smoothies, and other beverages • Spread on a banana then roll in crushed, dry cereal or chopped nuts • <i>2 tablespoons of peanut butter provide ~7 grams of protein</i>

References: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Nutrition Care Manual. *Tips for Adding Protein.*