

What's Cooking?



Quick-Guide to Proteins

How Much Protein Do I Need?

The amount of protein you need in a day depends on age, sex, and level of physical activity. On average, the amount each person needs can vary between 2 and 6.5 servings per day. If you are more physically active, you may need to increase your protein intake.

What Counts as One Serving of Protein?

The USDA calculates protein servings according to how many ounces it weighs. In general, one ounce of protein equals one serving. 1 ounce of meat, ¼ cup cooked beans, 1 egg, 1 tablespoon of peanut butter, or ½ ounce of nuts or seeds can be considered as one serving of protein.

Here are some examples of different serving sizes of different sources of proteins provided by the USDA:

	One Ounce/One Serving Size	Common Portion Sizes
Turf Meats	1 ounce cooked beef, pork, or ham	1 small lean hamburger = 2-3 ounces
Poultry Meats	1 ounce cooked chicken or turkey 1 sandwich slice of turkey	1 chicken breast = 3 ounces
Seafood	1 ounce cooked fish	1 can tuna = 3 ounces
Eggs	1 egg	3 egg whites = 2 ounces
Nuts and Seeds	½ ounce of nuts ½ ounces of seeds	12 almonds = ½ ounce 85 pumpkin seeds = 12 ounce 1 tablespoon peanut butter = 1 ounce
Beans, Peas, and Lentils	¼ cup cooked beans, peas, or lentils ¼ cup baked beans ¼ cup of tofu	½ cup beans = 2 ounces 2 tablespoons hummus = 1 ounce

Featured Ingredient of the Week: Proteins



Seafood, meat, poultry, eggs, beans, peas, lentils, nuts and seeds, and soy products are all considered part of the protein food group. Proteins are an essential part of a healthy diet and are important for several body functions and overall well-being. Proteins serve as building blocks for bones, muscles, cartilage, skin, and blood. Proteins also provide additional nutrients such as B vitamins, iron, zinc, and magnesium which are important for maintaining oxygen levels, energy, and immune health. It is important that you are getting enough protein in your diet and choosing the right kinds of proteins to fuel your body.

How to Add Protein to your Diet:

- Include a protein food in every meal and try to vary your protein sources to ensure that you are getting a full range of nutrients.
- Eggs and beans are easy to include in any meal. Throw them in a breakfast scramble or burrito, add them to your fried rice or a grain bowl
- Add Greek yogurt to your diet. Greek yogurt is a versatile food that is packed with protein. Eat it by itself as a snack with chopped fruit or use it as a substitute for sour cream in dips, sauces, and other recipes.
- Get your protein in with snacks! Cheese, nuts, and peanut butter are all great sources of protein that will help keep you full and fueled throughout the day.

