

Food Choices for Increasing Your Protein Intake

Protein is an important part of your diet. Protein helps build, maintain and repair your body. Protein is also used for energy if you do not eat enough calories. So, it is important to increase protein as part of a healthy diet that contains enough calories.

Some foods have more protein than others. Protein is found in greater amounts in meat, poultry, fish, eggs, cheese, milk, yogurt, lentils, dried peas, dried beans, nuts and tofu. Some high protein foods are also high in fat. Most people should choose low fat protein choices. Talk to a dietitian who can help you decide which high protein foods are best for you.

Protein is also found in protein powders and nutritional liquid supplements. These products can increase protein intake, but there are many brands and types on the market. These products are not necessary for everyone. It is best to talk to a dietitian before you use these products.

Here are some suggestions on how to increase protein intake.

Food	Suggestions
Powdered milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add powdered milk to fluid milk or to milkshakes, puddings, custards, smoothies or other recipes. • Add powdered milk to cereals, potatoes, cream soups, gravies, sauces, pudding, scrambled eggs, casseroles and meat loaf. Powdered milk can also be added to cookie, cake and muffin batters. • Use fluid milk (or powdered milk and water) instead of water in recipes which include water.
Cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melt cheese on hamburgers, meat loaf, other meats, poultry, fish, vegetables, tortillas or scrambled eggs. • Melt cheese into soups, sauces, casseroles or mashed potatoes. • Add cheese to sandwiches. • Use cheese for snacks with fruit or on crackers. • Try cottage cheese in casseroles, egg dishes or gelatin desserts. • Add cheese to salads.
Peanut butter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread peanut butter on toast, sandwiches or crackers. • Blend peanut butter into milkshakes. • Swirl peanut butter into ice cream, yogurt or hot cereal. • Use peanut butter as a dip for vegetables or fruits.

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Food	Suggestions
Eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use eggs to make French toast. • Add extra eggs to pancake or cookie batter. • Chop up hard-boiled eggs and add to salads, vegetables or casseroles. • Mix hard boiled eggs with mayonnaise for a sandwich spread. The egg white has more protein than the egg yolk. <p><u>Note:</u> Some people add raw eggs to egg-nogs or milkshakes. Raw eggs can cause food poisoning. You can buy pasteurized eggs at your grocery store. Pasteurized eggs are safe to use. For more information, talk to your dietitian.</p>
Nuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add nuts to ice cream, pudding, muffins or cookies, salads and pasta sauces. <p><u>Note:</u> Nuts are not a good choice for people who are at risk of choking.</p>
Meats, Fish, Poultry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add meat (such as leftovers, canned fish or deli meats) to soups, omelets, casseroles, soufflés, sandwich fillings, crackers, dips or stuffing. • Use chopped or ground meats, poultry or fish for people who cannot chew or swallow well.
Yogurt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have yogurt as a snack or as a dessert. • Use yogurt as a topping for fruit, pudding or other desserts.
Legumes: beans, peas, and lentils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add beans, peas and lentils to soups and casseroles. • Use beans, peas and lentils in dips and sauces.
Tofu (all kinds)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add tofu to soup, salads and sauces. Tofu can be used as a substitute for meat.

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