

## Quick Nutrition Check for Protein

Protein is found in many foods and is needed to keep you healthy. It provides building blocks for growth and for repairing cells like those in your muscles, skin, and nails. Your body also uses protein to make enzymes and hormones. This resource will help you to make sure you are getting the right amount of protein in your diet.

How much protein do you need?

Adults over 19 years of age need 0.8 grams (g) of protein per kilogram (kg) of body weight. You can use the following equations to find out how much protein you need.

Step 1: Weight in pounds (lbs)  $\div$  2.2 = weight in kg

Step 2: Weight in kg  $\times$  0.8 = Average Daily Protein Need

Note: 1 kilogram = 2.2 lbs

An adult male who weighs 80 kg (176 lbs) needs about 64 g of protein each day.

An adult female who weighs 65 kg (143 lbs) needs about 52 g of protein each day.

The following groups have different protein needs than what is recommended above:

- | children
- | pregnant and breastfeeding women
- | some athletes

Talk to a registered dietitian to help determine the amount of protein that's right for you.



### Steps you can take

Protein is found in meats, fish, poultry, milk, eggs, cheese, yogurt, dried or canned peas, beans and lentils, nuts and seeds and their butters, and in soy products like tofu and soy beverage. Grains, vegetables, and fruit also add small amounts of protein to your diet. Eating protein from a wide variety of food sources will also help you meet your needs for nutrients like iron, zinc, vitamin B12, calcium, and vitamin D.

Protein powders (e.g. whey powder) will add protein to your diet, but do not have significant sources of other nutrients that your body needs. In contrast, milk is a source of protein, and also has calcium, vitamins D, B12, and B2 (riboflavin).

Follow Canada's Food Guide [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php) when you plan your meals. This will help you meet your daily protein needs. Canada's Food Guide suggests that each day you aim for:

- | 7 - 10 servings of vegetables and fruits: one serving is equal to a medium sized vegetable or fruit, or 125 mL (1/2 cup);
- | 6 - 8 servings of grain products: one serving is equal to/could be 1 slice (35 g) of bread or 125 mL (1/2 cup) cooked pasta or rice;
- | 2 - 3 servings of milk and alternatives: one serving could be 250 mL (1 cup) of milk or 175 mL (3/4 cup) of yogurt or 250 mL (1 cup) of soy beverage; and
- | 2 - 3 servings of meat and alternatives: one serving could be 75 g (2 1/2 oz) of meat or 175 mL (3/4 cup) cooked legumes or tofu.

To estimate the amount of protein in your diet, keep a food record for one or two days, recording what you eat and drink. Then, add up the protein in your diet using the amounts in foods listed below.

<i>Food</i>	<i>Portion</i>	<i>Protein (g) (approximate)</i>
Meat, fish or poultry, cooked	75 g (2 1/2 oz) / 125 mL (1/2 cup)	21
Firm tofu	150 g / 175 mL (3/4 cup)	12
Egg, chicken	2 large	12
Cheese	50 g (1 1/2 oz)	12

Cottage cheese	125 mL (1/2 cup)	13
Fortified soy beverage	250 mL (1 cup)	7-8
Dried beans, peas or lentils, cooked	175 mL (3/4 cup)	12
Cow's milk	250 mL (1 cup)	9
Yogurt	175 mL (3/4 cup)	7
Yogurt, Greek style	175 mL (3/4 cup)	14
Peanut butter or other nut/seed spreads	30 mL (2 Tbsp)	4
Nuts or seeds	60 mL (1/4 cup)	3-8
Bread	1 slice (35 g)	4
Cereals, cold	30 g	3
Cereals, hot	175 mL (3/4 cup)	4
Pasta or rice, cooked	125 mL (1/2 cup)	3
Quinoa, cooked	125 mL (1/2 cup)	4
Vegetables	125 mL (1/2 cup) or 250 mL (1 cup) lettuce	2
Fruit	1 fruit or 125 mL (1/2 cup)	1

Source: Canadian Nutrient File, March 2015.



## Additional Resources

HealthLink BC <http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/> Medically approved non-emergency health information and advice.

Dietitian Services Fact Sheets available by mail (call 8-1-1) or at <http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating>:

- | Canada's Food Guide [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php)
- | [Quick Nutrition Check for Protein: Sample Menus](#)

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## Notes

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Dietitian Services at HealthLinkBC (formerly Dial-A-Dietitian), providing free nutrition information and resources for BC residents and health professionals. Go to [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthyeating) or call 8-1-1 (anywhere in BC). Interpreters are available in over 130 languages.