

Why is Protein Important?

Good nutrition is an important part of treatment and recovery. Getting enough protein can help you:

- Build a healthy immune system
- Fight infection
- Recover from illness more quickly

Protein rich foods are a good source of calories which is an important part of maintaining your body weight throughout treatment.

How much protein do I need?

The average healthy adult needs:

- 0.8g per kg body weight

Individuals undergoing cancer treatment may have increased protein needs. Your needs *may* range from 1.0-1.5g per kg body weight. Speak with a Registered Dietitian about your protein needs.

Here's an example of how to calculate your protein needs:

Example – 154 lbs average healthy man or woman

1. Convert lbs to kg: 154 lbs divided by 2.2 = 70 kg
2. Multiply kg by your protein requirement: 70 kg x 0.8 = 56g protein daily

Main Protein Sources:

Animal Sources: dairy products; meat, fish, and poultry; eggs

Plant Sources: nuts and seeds; soy products; beans and legumes

Protein Rich Foods

Food category	Serving Size	Approximate Protein content (g)
1. Meat (Cooked) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beef, pork, lamb veal or wild game • Chicken, turkey or duck 	3oz (about the size of a deck of cards)	25g
2. Fish or Shell fish (Cooked) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuna, Salmon, Sole, Halibut • Shrimp, crab, lobster • Canned fish 	3oz ½ can of canned tuna or salmon	20g
3. Beans and Legumes (cooked or canned) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lima beans, Kidney beans, Chick peas, Lentils 	½ cup	8g
4. Soy products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soybeans • Tofu (firm) • Tofu (soft) • Soy Milk • Tempeh 	½ cup ½ cup ½ cup 1 cup ½ cup	15g 20g 10g 6g 15g
5. Eggs and Dairy Products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cottage cheese • Eggs • Skim milk powder • Yogurt (regular) • Yogurt (Greek or Balkan style) • Milk • Cheese 	½ cup 1 large ½ cup ¾ cup ¾ cup 1 cup 1 oz	16g 5g 13g 8g 15g 9g 4-9g
6. Nuts and Nut Butters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts - Almonds, peanuts, mixed nuts, pine nuts • Seeds – Pumpkin, squash • Peanut butter 	¼ cup ¼ cup 2 Tbsp	8g 10g 8g

How Can I Increase my Protein Intake?

- Include high protein foods at every meal and/or snack
- Eat the protein food first before other food items
- Double the meat or fish portion in your sandwich or meal
- Add extra egg whites to homemade French toast, pancakes or waffles
- Add firm tofu to stir fries and casseroles
- Add meat or poultry to homemade soups or salads
- Add cut up egg or egg white to salads or casseroles
- Keep hard cooked eggs on hand for easy snacks
- Eat baked custard, bread pudding or rice pudding made with extra eggs or egg whites
- Add pasteurized liquid eggs to shakes (not raw eggs)
- Cook extra portions of protein foods to have leftovers for meals or snacks
- Add **protein powder** to suitable beverages and foods

Adapted from "How can you increase your protein intake" developed by the Renal Program of Vancouver General Hospital

How to use protein powder?

Use ½ cup of food or drink for each scoop of protein powder.

For best results with liquids: mix with a small amount of the liquid to make a smooth paste, then gradually add the remaining liquid while stirring.

Stir into:

- Drinks: juice, milk, coffee, tea, water, nutrition supplements
- Savory Food: mashed potato, spaghetti sauce, stew, chicken/tuna/pasta salad, curry dishes, scrambled eggs
- Sweet Food: oatmeal, cream of wheat, apple sauce, puddings, custards, ice cream
- Spreads: margarine, butter, peanut butter, sour cream, mayonnaise
- Soup: broth, vegetable, noodle or cream soups, congee

Flour:

For every cup of flour a recipe calls for, add 1/3 cup protein powder and 2-3 tbps of extra liquid. Use to make cookies, cake or muffins.

Sprinkle:

- ¼ cup protein powder
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- ½ cup sugar

Put into a shaker and sprinkle on hot rolls, French toast, pancakes, hot or cold cereals.

Spread:

- 4 scoops protein powder
- ½ cup non-hydrogenated margarine or cream cheese
- Herbs or honey (if desired)

Spread on rolls, bread, toast, muffins, pasta, rice

Shake:

- 1 cup Milk
- 2 scoops protein powder
- ½ cup fresh or frozen strawberries, blueberries or canned peaches
- 1 tbsp canola oil
- 1 tbsp sugar

Mix in a blender until smooth

Adapted from "How to Use Protein Powder?" developed by the Renal Program of Vancouver General Hospital

Visit our website: www.bccancer.bc.ca