

PROTEIN: GO LEAN WITH PROTEIN

What is included?

You can add a lot of variety to this corner of your plate!

- ▶ Poultry (chicken and turkey)
- ▶ Beef
- ▶ Pork
- ▶ Seafood (including fish and shellfish)
- ▶ Eggs and egg substitutes
- ▶ Nuts and seeds
- ▶ Beans, lentils and peas
- ▶ Tofu



What counts as a 1-ounce serving?

- ▶ 1 ounce of meat, poultry, or fish
- ▶ 1 egg
- ▶ 1/4 cup cooked beans
- ▶ 1 tablespoon of peanut butter
- ▶ 1/2 ounce of nuts or seeds

Why is it important to eat PROTEIN foods?

- ▶ Protein foods supply nutrients that are important for your child's growth and help the body recover from activity. These nutrients include the following: protein, B vitamins (niacin, thiamin, riboflavin, and B6), iron, zinc, magnesium, and Vitamin E.
- ▶ Eating 8 ounces per week of seafood may help reduce the risk for heart disease. Seafood contains omega-3 fatty acids, such as EPA and DHA.
- ▶ Eating peanuts and certain tree nuts (i.e., walnuts, almonds, and pistachios) may reduce the risk of heart disease when consumed as part of a healthy diet. Because nuts and seeds are high in calories, eat them in small portions. You could use them to replace other protein foods, like some meat or poultry, rather than adding them to what you already eat. Choose unsalted nuts and seeds to help reduce sodium intake.

Tips:

- ▶ Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate.
- ▶ Choose beans, peas, or soy products as a main dish or part of a meal often. Beans are a natural source of fiber and protein.
- ▶ Choose unsalted nuts as a snack or put them on salads or in main dishes.

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Why choose lean proteins?

- ▶ Foods in the protein group provide nutrients that are important for your health, but some of the foods are high in saturated fat. Diets that are high in saturated fats raise bad cholesterol levels in the blood, which increases the risk for heart disease.
- ▶ To help keep blood cholesterol levels healthy, choose leaner cuts of meat and choose a variety of protein foods.



How to choose lean proteins:

Lean cuts include the following:

- ▶ Beef: round steaks and roasts (eye of round, top round, bottom round, round tip), top loin, top sirloin, and chuck shoulder and arm roasts.
- ▶ Ground beef: Choose extra lean ground beef that says at least “90% lean” on the label.
- ▶ Pork: pork loin, tenderloin, center loin, and ham.
- ▶ Chicken: Boneless skinless chicken breasts and turkey cutlets are the leanest poultry choices. Buy skinless chicken parts or take off the skin before cooking.
- ▶ Deli meats: Choose lean turkey, roast beef, ham, or low-fat meats instead of deli meats with more fat, such as regular bologna or salami.
- ▶ Trim away all of the visible fat from meats and poultry before cooking.
- ▶ Broil, grill, roast, or poach meat, poultry, or fish instead of frying.
- ▶ Drain off any fat that appears during cooking.
- ▶ Skip or limit the breading. Breading adds calories and soaks up more fat during frying.
- ▶ Choose and prepare meat without high fat sauces or gravies.

What if you do not eat meat?

Protein sources for vegetarians include the following:

- ▶ Eggs (for ovo-vegetarians)
- ▶ Beans and peas
- ▶ Nuts and nut butters
- ▶ Soy products (tofu, tempeh, veggie burgers)

Tips for vegetarians:

- ▶ Build meals around protein sources that are naturally low in fat, such as beans, lentils, and rice.
- ▶ Do not overload meals with high-fat cheeses to replace the meat.