



To Your Health

Nutrition & Health Coaching

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# Guide to Protein-Rich Foods

*Your companion to the  
Daily Protein Intake  
Calculator*

Use the  
Protein  
Calculator



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## Introduction: How to Use This Guide

By Linda Hubbard, RN

As a health and nutrition specialist, I'm asked about protein all the time: "How much do I need?", "Which foods have the most?", and "How do I fit more into my day?" These are great questions — and the answers are different for everyone, depending on your age, gender, weight, activity level, and food preferences.

That's exactly why I created the [To Your Health Daily Protein Intake Calculator](#) — and this guide to go along with it. Together, they'll help you identify your personal protein target, find the right foods to hit it, and incorporate them into your daily diet. Here's how I suggest you use them together:

**Step 1:** Use the [To Your Health Protein Calculator](#) to find your personalized daily protein target, based on your age, gender, weight, and activity level. A blanket "one-size-fits-all" number won't serve you. Your needs are unique.

**Step 2:** Bring that number to this guide. You'll find the best protein-rich foods across every category — meat and poultry, seafood, dairy, and plant-based sources — with approximate grams of protein per serving. Use it as your grocery list, your meal-planning reference, or a quick reminder of what to reach for at each meal.

**Step 3:** Check out the sample one-day menu at the end of the guide to see how 100 grams of protein can fit into a realistic day of eating.

Small, consistent shifts make a real difference in how you feel, how you move, and how well your body ages. This guide is here to make those shifts as easy as possible.

Here's *to your health* — and to feeling your best at every age.

Linda Hubbard, RN

Nutrition Specialist & Founder, To Your Health





## Protein: Facts You Should Know

### Protein: A Fundamental Nutrient

Protein plays one of the most fundamental roles of any nutrient in your body. It maintains and repairs muscle, supports your immune system, regulates hormones, fuels cellular metabolism, and helps keep you feeling full and satisfied after meals.

And protein is having a moment! The rise of strength training (especially among women), greater awareness of age-related muscle loss, and the explosion of GLP-1 weight-loss medications (which can accelerate muscle loss) have all pushed protein to the front of the nutrition conversation. The science backs it up: protein supports muscle, metabolism, energy, appetite control, and healthy aging — making it one of the most valuable nutrients in your diet, especially after age 40.



### The Protein-Aging Connection

Here's something that doesn't get nearly enough attention: starting in your 40s, your body becomes less efficient at using the protein you eat. That means you may be falling short even if your diet hasn't changed, and the gap widens with every passing decade.

The result is *sarcopenia* — the gradual loss of muscle mass and strength that comes with aging, and one of the leading reasons older adults feel weaker, move more slowly, and become more vulnerable to injury. The good news? Adequate protein intake is one of the most effective tools we have for slowing down that process.



## Protein: Facts You Should Know

### Spread Your Protein Intake Throughout the Day

Here's another insight that often gets overlooked: *when* you eat protein matters almost as much as the *amount* you eat. Your body can only use so much at once for muscle repair — roughly 15 to 30 grams per meal is the sweet spot.

Rather than loading up at dinner (the most common pattern), aim to distribute protein evenly across three meals and a snack or two. Think eggs or Greek yogurt for breakfast, chicken or beans for lunch, and fish or lean meat for dinner.



### How Much Do You Actually Need? Our Protein Calculator Has the Answer!

New 2026 U.S. government guidelines recommend 1.2-1.6 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight per day. Some scientific panels recommend higher protein levels (up to 2.0+ grams per kg of body weight) for active adults, middle-aged adults, and seniors. So what level is right for you? This is where the To Your Health Daily Protein Intake Calculator can help.

Using the latest peer-reviewed studies and scientific panel recommendations, our protein calculator will determine your optimal daily protein intake, personalized for you, based on your gender, age, weight, and activity level. With this tool, you will have a specific daily protein target to better plan your diet. **The protein calculator can be found at:**

[www.toyourhealth360.com/protein-calculator/](https://www.toyourhealth360.com/protein-calculator/)

**Please note:** Individuals should consult their healthcare provider prior to significantly increasing protein intake, particularly those with kidney disease or reduced kidney function and those using prescription weight loss medications, such as GLP-1 based medications.



## Protein-Rich Foods: A Comprehensive List

The following lists show the approximate grams of protein per standard serving for a wide range of foods across four categories. Use these as your go-to reference when planning meals and tracking your daily protein intake. All values are approximate and may vary by brand, preparation method, or cut.



### Meat & Poultry

Food	Serving Size	Protein (g)
Chicken breast (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	26
Chicken thighs (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	21
Turkey breast (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	25
Ground turkey (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	23
Ground beef, lean (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	22
Sirloin steak (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	26
Top round / bottom round beef	3 oz (85g)	25
Beef roast	3 oz (85g)	25
Pork tenderloin (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	22
Pork loin (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	24
Ham, extra lean (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	18
Lamb leg (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	22
Duck (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	19
Venison/Bison (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	23
Beef/Turkey jerky	1 oz (28g)	10-13



## Protein-Rich Foods: A Comprehensive List



### Seafood

Food	Serving Size	Protein (g)
Tuna, yellowfin (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	26
Tuna, canned (light, in water)	3 oz (85g)	20
Salmon (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	22
Tilapia (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	22
Cod, Pacific (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	19
Swordfish (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	19
Halibut (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	20
Shrimp (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	20
Crab, Alaska king (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	16
Sardines (canned in water)	3 oz (85g)	20
Mackerel (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	20
Haddock, smoked	3 oz (85g)	19
Mahi-mahi (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	20
Scallops (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	17
Lobster (cooked)	3 oz (85g)	17



## Protein-Rich Foods: A Comprehensive List

Protein content in dairy products can vary widely from product to product. Protein content also varies with fat content (the less fat, the more protein). For the most accurate measurement of protein in a product, read the nutrition label.



### Dairy

Food	Serving Size	Protein (g)
Greek yogurt, nonfat plain	6 oz (170g)	17
Skyr (Icelandic yogurt)	6 oz (170g)	17
Plain yogurt, nonfat	6 oz (170g)	8
Cottage cheese, low-fat	½ cup	13
Parmesan (grated)	1 oz	10
Whey protein powder	1 scoop (~30g)	24
Ricotta, part-skim	½ cup	14
Provolone	1 oz	7
Cheddar	1 oz	7
Mozzarella	1 oz	7
Swiss cheese	1 oz	8
Kefir, low-fat	1 cup (240ml)	9
Milk, skim or 2%	1 cup (240ml)	8
Feta	1 oz	4
String cheese	1 stick (28g)	7
Eggs	1 Large Egg	6



## Protein-Rich Foods: A Comprehensive List

Plant-based eating doesn't have to mean skimping on protein. These foods prove otherwise – and many pack a nutritional bonus of fiber, healthy fats, and antioxidants alongside their protein content.



### Plant-Based Proteins

Food	Serving Size	Protein (g)
<b>Soy &amp; Meat Alternatives</b>		
Seitan (wheat gluten)	3 oz (85g)	19
Tempeh	½ cup	15
Tofu, firm	½ cup	15-20
Tofu, soft	½ cup	9
Edamame (cooked, shelled)	1 cup	18
Soybeans, cooked	½ cup	14
<b>Beans &amp; Legumes</b>		
Lentils, cooked	½ cup	10
Black beans, cooked	½ cup	8
Kidney beans, cooked	½ cup	8
Chickpeas (garbanzo beans)	½ cup	7
Pinto beans, cooked	½ cup	8
Peas, cooked	½ cup	4



## Protein-Rich Foods: A Comprehensive List



### Plant-Based Proteins (continued)

Food	Serving Size	Protein (g)
<b>Whole Grains</b>		
Oats (cooked)	1 cup	6
Quinoa (cooked)	1 cup	8
Amaranth (cooked)	1 cup	9
Farro (cooked)	1 cup	7
<b>Nuts &amp; Seeds</b>		
Hemp seeds	3 Tbsp	9
Pumpkin seeds	1 oz (28g)	8
Peanuts	¼ cup	9
Peanut butter	2 Tbsp	7
Almonds	¼ cup	7
Chia seeds	2 Tbsp	5
Nutritional yeast	2 Tbsp	6



## Eating Over 100 Grams of Protein in a Day: A Sample Menu

You've used the [Protein Calculator](#), and you know your protein target — now what? Sometimes the hardest part is just seeing what it looks like in real life. Below is a sample one-day menu designed to hit approximately 100 grams of protein. This is not a prescription — it's simply a practical example to show you how achievable that target can be when you build your meals with protein in mind.

Everyone's recommended protein intake is different, and your personalized range from the [Protein Calculator](#) will be your real guide. That said, this menu is a great starting point for ideas.

### Breakfast: ~25-35g Protein

Option A:

- 3 large eggs, scrambled or over-easy (18g protein)
- ¾ cup (6 oz) plain Greek yogurt with ¼ cup fresh berries (~17g protein)

Option B — Protein Smoothie:

- Blend 1 scoop protein powder or ¾ cup Greek yogurt with your choice of fruit, a handful of spinach, and 2 Tbsp hemp or chia seeds (25-30g protein)

### Mid-Morning Snack: ~13g Protein

- ½ cup low-fat cottage cheese with crackers or sliced fruit (13g protein)

### Lunch: ~25-30g Protein

- 3 oz (85g) grilled chicken breast (26g protein)
- 1 cup cooked quinoa (8g protein)
- Mixed salad greens with your favorite veggies and olive oil dressing

**Plant-Based Swap:** Replace the chicken with ½ cup firm tofu (15-20g) + ½ cup cooked lentils (10g) for a comparable protein total.



## Eating Over 100 Grams of Protein in a Day: A Sample Menu (continued)

### Afternoon Snack: ~10g Protein

- 1 protein bar or 1 scoop protein or collagen powder blended into a small shake (~10g protein)

### Dinner: ~25-35g Protein

- 3 oz baked salmon (~22g protein) or 3 oz baked cod (~19g protein)
- 1 cup steamed broccoli (~3g protein)
- ½ cup cooked lentils (~10g protein)

**Plant-Based Swap:** Replace the fish with 4 oz (1/2 cup) of baked tofu (15-20g) and increase the lentils to 1 full cup (20g) to keep your protein totals within range.

### Daily Total: >100g Protein

The beauty of this kind of planning is that once you know which foods are your protein powerhouses, building a high-protein day becomes second nature. You don't need to count every gram obsessively – just make sure you're including a good protein source at every meal and snack, and you'll likely be right on track.



**Do you have any questions or comments regarding this guide? Then we want to hear from you! Please [contact us](#) with your feedback!**

*The To Your Health Guide to Protein-Rich Foods is provided for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for medical advice. Always consult your healthcare provider before making significant changes to your diet.*

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