Protein

Key Nutrients in Protein Foods

• Protein — Essential for building bones, muscles, skin, and blood.

• B Vitamins — Help release energy from protein and build tissues.

• Zinc — Helps the immune system function.

How Much Should We Consume Each Day?

Adults and youth over 8 years old

• 5-6 ounces*

Children between 2-8 years old

• 2-4 ounces*

Where Do We Get These Nutrients?

In lean meats, seafood, beans and peas, nuts and seeds, poultry, and eggs.

What Counts as One Ounce of Protein?

In general, 1 ounce of meat, poultry, or fish; ¼ cup cooked beans; 1 egg; 1 tbsp. of peanut butter; or ½ ounce of nuts or seeds

Healthful Tips

• Grill, broil, poach, or roast meats instead of frying them — which adds fat.

• To help prevent heart disease, eat at least 8 ounces of seafood a week.

• White fish, in particular, is lower in fat than any other source of animal protein, and oily fish are high in omega-3 fatty acids, or the "good" fats.

• Choose lean or low-fat meats and poultry, or fish, to truly “go lean with protein.”

*These amounts are appropriate for individuals who get up to 30 minutes of moderate physical activity per day beyond their normal activity. Those who are more physically active may be able to consume more protein, provided they stay within required calorie levels.

Go lean with protein