

## Keep You and Your Family Lean with Lean PROTEIN

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### What is protein?

You may already know that muscles are made up of protein, but so many other important parts of the human body need protein too. That's why protein is so important for normal growth and development.

Protein works together with other nutrients, like carbohydrates and fats, to make you strong and healthy. Protein comes from many of the foods you eat, but the type of protein food and the amount you eat makes a big difference.

Some types of protein foods are higher in fat or contain saturated fat which is bad for your heart if you eat large amounts. Animal protein foods are often higher in fat and contain larger amounts of saturated fats. Vegetable protein foods are often low in fat and contain rather small amounts of saturated fat. When you choose animal protein foods, choose those that are lower in fat like lean meat and low-fat or non-fat milk.



### Healthy PROTEIN Foods

Beans & Peas	kidney beans, red beans, black beans, pinto beans, white beans, chickpeas, green peas, soybeans, tofu, and more
Nuts & Seeds	peanuts, almonds, walnuts, sunflower seeds, pecans, pumpkin seeds, cashews, and more
Fish	tuna, salmon, and many other types of fish
Lean Poultry	skinless chicken and turkey
Lean Meat	lean cuts of beef, pork, and lamb
Eggs	whole eggs, egg whites, and egg substitute
Milk	low-fat or non-fat

### How much healthy protein do I need?

The average person needs 5 1/2 ounces of protein-rich foods each day.

#### What gives ONE ounce of protein?

Beans & Peas	1/4 cup cooked beans or tofu
Nuts & Seeds	1 tablespoon nut butter (like peanut butter or almond butter) or 1/2 ounce nuts or seeds
Fish	1 ounce fish
Lean Poultry	1 ounce poultry
Lean Meat	1 ounce meat
Eggs	1 whole egg or 1/3 cup egg substitute
Milk	3 cups of low-fat or non-fat fluid milk or 3/4 cup of instant non-fat dry milk.



1 small chicken breast = 3 ounces

Source: USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005

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## Cooking Beans, Legumes, and Peas

Beans, legumes, and peas are among the cheapest and healthiest foods. Use them in soups, stews, and other baked dishes, or mix them in with your favorite salad. Many people overlook these wonderful culinary treasures, but beans, legumes, and peas are high in protein and fiber, low in fat, and full of flavor! Dry beans, legumes, and peas are easy to cook, and far cheaper than their canned version. Plus, since they are so high in protein, you can replace meat with beans for a few meals each week.

### 3 Easy Steps to the PERFECT Bean

1. Soak and Rinse – Spread beans out on a clean kitchen towel or baking sheet. Throw away any beans that are discolored or shriveled. Pour the good beans into a colander or bowl and rinse well with cold clean water. Drain.
2. Soak – Most dry beans, except lentils and split peas, need to be soaked before cooking them. There are 2 ways to soak beans.

**Short soak** – Place beans in a large cooking pot with lid. Cover the beans with a 3 inch layer of water (or about 4 to 5 cups of water per 1 cup of beans). Bring to a boil. Continue boiling for 3 minutes. Cover the pot, and set aside for 2 to 4 hours. Drain and throw away the water. Rinse beans before cooking.

**Long soak** – Place beans in a large cooking pot with lid. Cover the beans with a 3 inch layer of water (or about 4 to 5 cups of water per 1 cup of beans). Cover the pot and soak beans for 8 hours or overnight. Drain and throw away the water. Rinse beans well before cooking.

3. Cook – Cook beans in fresh water (if you want to season your beans while they cook, see below for more information), using a large cooking pot with lid. Use about 3 to 4 cups of water for each cup of beans (or enough water to cover the beans by 1 inch). Bring beans to a boil. Reduce heat to low, and simmer until tender. Stir occasionally. Check the directions on the package for more information on cooking times for each type of bean, legume, or pea.

#### **NOTE: seasoning beans**

To add more flavor to your beans, try adding these spices to the cooking water: chopped onion, garlic, and/or bay leaves. Add all other spices and seasonings 30 minutes before the beans are finished cooking. Do not add salt, sugar, tomatoes, vinegar, wine, or lemon juice until after the beans are completely cooked.



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