



Food Group Focus: Go Lean with Protein

Foods from the protein group are part of a healthy meal plan supplying a variety of essential nutrients including protein, B vitamins, vitamin E, iron, zinc and magnesium. MyPlate recommends selecting a variety of protein foods including at least 8 ounces of seafood per week. Many foods from the Protein Group are high in fat and cholesterol. Though some fish, nuts and seeds are higher in fat; these foods contain healthy oils and can be

consumed in place of meat and poultry. Choosing lean meats and poultry and including healthy types of fat daily can help reduce the risk of heart disease. Be aware that the higher fat content of nuts, seeds and some fish can lead to the intake of more calories than you realize. Check portion sizes for these higher fat, healthy foods.

What Foods are in the Protein Group?

All foods made from meat, poultry, fish, beans or peas, eggs, nuts and seeds are considered part of the Protein Group. Dry beans and peas are also part of the Vegetable Group.

Protein Foods Group				
<u>Meats*</u>	<u>Poultry*</u>	<u>Beans & Peas</u>	<u>Nuts & seeds*</u>	<u>Seafood*</u>
<i>Lean cuts of:</i>	Chicken	Black beans	Almonds	Catfish
Beef	Duck	Black-eyed peas	Cashews	Cod
Ham	Goose	Chick peas	Hazelnuts	Flounder
Lamb	Turkey	Falafel	Peanuts	Haddock
Pork	Ground chicken and turkey	Kidney beans	peanut butter	Halibut
<i>Game Meats:</i>		Lentils	Pecans	Herring
Bison		Lima beans (mature)	Pistachios	Salmon
Rabbit		Pinto beans	pumpkin seeds	Sea bass
Venison	<u>Eggs*</u>	Soy beans	sunflower seeds	Snapper
<i>Lean Ground Meats:</i>	Chicken Eggs	Split peas	walnuts	Swordfish
Beef	Duck Eggs	<u>Processed Soy</u>		Trout
Pork		<u>Products</u>		Tuna
Lamb		Tofu		<u>Shellfish</u>
<i>Lean Luncheon or deli meats**</i>		Bean burgers		Crab
<i>Organ Meats:</i>		Veggie burgers		Clams
Liver		Tempeh		Lobster
GIBLETS		Textured vegetarian Protein (TVP)		Scallops
				Shrimp
				mussels

*Choose lean or low-fat meat and poultry (90% lean or more). If higher fat choices are made such as regular ground beef (75% to 80% lean), sausage, hotdogs, or chicken with skin. The fat counts against your maximum limit for “empty calories”.

How to Keep It Lean

1. **Trim** away all of the visible fat from meats and poultry before cooking.
2. **Broil, grill, roast or poach** meat, poultry or fish instead of frying.
3. **Season** meat, poultry, fish and dried beans with broth, herbs and spices instead of using fat for flavor.
4. **Choose extra lean** ground beef and turkey. The label should say at least “90% lean”.

How Much Do I Need?

The amount of food you need each day from the Protein Group depends on your age, gender and activity level. Look at the chart below to find the amount of recommended from this group.

Age		Daily Recommendation*
		(ounce equivalents)
		Total Daily
Children	2 to 3 years	2
	4 to 8 years	4
Girls	9 to 13 years	5
	14 to 18 years	5
Boys	9 to 13 years	5
	14 to 18 years	6
Women	19 – 30 years	5 ½
	31 – 50 years	5
	51+ years	5
Men	19 – 30 years	6 ½
	31 – 50 years	6
	51+ years	5 ½

*Amounts are for those who get less than 30 minutes per day of moderate physical activity beyond normal daily activities. Visit www.choosemyplate.gov for more information.

How to determine what counts as an ounce?

Food	Amount that counts as 1 ounce equivalent in the Protein Foods Group	Common portions and ounce equivalents
Meats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 ounce cooked lean beef 1 ounce cooked lean pork or ham 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 small steak (eye of round, filet) = 3 ½ to 4 ounce 1 small lean hamburger = 2 to 3 ounce
Poultry	1 ounce cooked chicken or turkey, without skin 1 sandwich slice of turkey (4½ x 2½ x 1/8")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 small chicken breast half = 3 ounces ½ Cornish game hen = 4 ounces 1 can tuna, drained = 3 to 4 ounces
Fish	1 ounce cooked fish or shell fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 can tuna, drained = 3 to 4 ounce equiv. 1 small salmon steak = 3 to 4 ounce equivalent
Eggs	1 large egg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 egg whites = 3 ounces 3 egg yolks = 1 ounce
Nuts & seeds	½ ounce of nuts (12 almonds, 24 pistachios, 7 walnut halves) ½ ounce of seeds (pumpkin or sunflower, roasted) 1 tablespoon of peanut or almond butter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 ounce of nuts or seeds = 2 ounces
Dry beans & peas	¼ cup of cooked dry beans (such as black, kidney, pinto or white beans) ¼ cup of cooked dried peas (such as chickpeas, lentils or split peas) ¼ cup of baked beans or refried beans ¼ cup (about 2 ounces) of tofu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 cup split pea soup = 2 ounces 1 cup lentil soup = 2 ounces 1 cup bean soup = 2 ounces 1 soy or bean burger patty = 2 ounces

<p>¼ cup roasted soybeans, 1 falafel patty (2¼”, 4 ounces) 2 tablespoons hummus, 1 oz. tempeh, cooked</p>

Tips To Help You Go Lean

In General:

- Serve fish more often for lunch and dinner. Be sure to include fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids such as salmon, trout and herring.
- Choose dry beans or peas as a main dish or part of a meal often. Add kidney or pinto beans to chili and Mexican dishes. Enjoy split pea, lentil, minestrone or white bean soups. Use garbanzo beans or kidney beans on a salad instead of turkey or ham.

As snacks:

- Eat nuts or seeds for a snack or add on a salad. Put one ounce of your favorite nuts or seeds in a snack size bag to enjoy during the day in place of high calorie, less nutritive snack foods.
- Add nuts and seeds to a salad instead of meat or cheese. Try walnuts or pecans on a green salad.

Keep It Safe

- Wash cutting boards, knives, utensils and counter tops in hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before going on to the next one.
- Cook foods to a safe temperature to kill microorganisms. Use a meat thermometer, which measures internal temperature of cooked meats and poultry, to make sure that the meat is cooked all the way through.
- Refrigerate or freeze cooked meat, poultry, prepared food and leftovers within 2 hours.
- Plan ahead to defrost meats and poultry. Never defrost food on the kitchen counter at room temperature. Thaw food by placing in the refrigerator, submerging air-tight packaged food in cold tap water or defrosting on a plate in the microwave.

GO, SLOW, WHOA Foods

An easy way to make smart and nutritious choices within each food group is to use the “Go, Slow, Whoa” concept. **GO** foods are the most “nutrient dense.” **SLOW** foods are higher in calories, fat and sugar than **GO** foods. **WHOA** foods may be high in calories, fat and sugar and offer little nutritional value.

Food Group	GO Eat almost anytime, based on calorie needs	SLOW Eat sometimes, at most several times a week	WHOA Eat only once in a while or on special occasions
Meats and Beans	Trimmed beef & pork; extra lean ground beef; chicken & turkey without skin; tuna canned in water; baked, broiled, steamed & grilled fish or shellfish; beans, split peas, lentils, tofu; nuts; egg whites & egg substitutes.	Lean ground beef, broiled hamburgers; ham, Canadian bacon; chicken & turkey with skin; low fat hot dogs; tuna packed in oil; peanut butter; whole eggs cooked without fat.	Untrimmed beef & pork; regular ground beef; fried hamburgers; ribs; bacon; fried chicken; chicken nuggets; hot dogs; lunch meats; pepperoni, sausage; fried fish & shellfish; whole eggs cooked with fat.

Turn learn more about “Go, Slow Whoa Foods,” visit www.nhlbi.nih.gov.

Recipes to Vary Your Protein and Go Lean

15 Minute Chili

The beans in this recipe helps extend the meat and add fiber, vitamins and minerals.

1 lb. ground turkey or lean ground beef	1 can (28 oz.) stewed tomatoes
1 cup fresh or frozen chopped onions	1 tablespoon. chili powder
1 can (16 oz.) pinto beans, drained & rinsed	1 tablespoon cumin powder
1 can (16 oz.) kidney beans, drained & rinsed	1/2 cup salsa

1. In a large pot, brown turkey with chopped onions. Add tomatoes and chop tomatoes with spoon breaking into small pieces.
2. Add seasonings and salsa to turkey mixture. Stir in drained, rinsed beans.
3. Cook until hot.

Makes 10 cups. Per cup: 186 calories, 14 gm protein, 22gm carbohydrate., 7gm fiber, 5gm fat, 36 mg cholesterol., 75gm calcium, 3.3 mg iron, 456 mg sodium.

Serve with: pasta, rice or a baked potato and a green salad.

Tasty Tuna Patties

2 cups soft bread crumbs	dash pepper
1/3 cup fresh or frozen chopped onions	1 tablespoon dried parsley flakes
2 cups flaked tuna	1 whole egg plus 1 egg white
1 tablespoon lemon juice	1/2 teaspoon dill
1 teaspoon onion powder	1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1. Drain tuna, flake. Combine all ingredients except oil, shape into 6 patties.
2. Spray nonstick skillet with nonstick spray, add oil. Heat on medium and cook patties until golden brown. Turn patties at least once.

Makes 6 servings. Per serving: 146 calories, 16 gm protein, 9 gm carbohydrate, 1 gm fiber, 4 gm fat, 57 mg cholesterol, 27 mg calcium, 1 mg iron, 280 mg sodium.

Serve with: cucumber dill sauce (below) on a multi-grain bun, cooked spinach and fruit cup.

Cucumber Dill Sauce Mix together 1 cup plain nonfat yogurt, 1 TB. lemon juice, 1 tsp. dill, 1 tsp. Dijon mustard, 1/4 cup finely chopped cucumber, 1/4 cup finely chopped green onion.

Chessa's Tex Mex Salad

1 can (19oz.) kidney beans drained and rinsed	1 tomato, chopped
1 can (16oz.) can chick peas, drained and rinsed	1 green pepper, chopped
1 can (8oz.) corn, drained and rinsed	1 cup baked tortilla chips, smashed
1/2 red onion, chopped	lettuce, shredded
1 cucumber, peeled, seeded & chopped	fat free Catalina salad dressing

1. Mix all ingredients except tortilla chips.
2. Toss with salad dressing and sprinkle with chips.

Makes about 10 cups or 6 servings. Per serving (without dressing): 150 calories, 9.5g protein, 39g carbohydrate, 1.5gm fat, 11g fiber, 0 g cholesterol, 42 mg calcium, 1.6mg iron, 170 mg sodium.