

DOOR STEP NUTRITION



April 2023

Protein As You Age

The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) include protein as a nutrient of concern for adults aged 60 and older. According to the DGA, “Intake patterns show average intakes of protein foods is lower for individuals ages 71 and older compared to adults ages 60 through 70. About 50% of women and 30% of men 71 and older fall short of protein foods recommendations.”

Protein is essential in preventing sarcopenia, the loss of muscle mass, strength, and function that occurs naturally as we age. Sarcopenia can lead to frailty and decreased independence. Adequate protein intake is the number one way to prevent muscle loss.

The body does not process protein as efficiently as it ages, therefore the requirement for older adults is higher than for those under 60 years of age. Research is showing the adequate amount of protein for an adult 60 years or older is 1.2 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight. For example, the protein recommendation for a 150 pound adult is 89 grams of protein per day. A good rule to follow is 25-30 grams of protein per meal. It is not necessary to calculate every single gram of protein you eat during the day, but being aware of what foods contain protein and including a variety of them daily at every meal will help you achieve this nutrient recommendation.

Protein can be found in animal and non-animal food sources. Here are some common foods and their protein content.

Meats, Poultry, Eggs	Serving Size	Protein Content
Beef	3 oz	23 g
Chicken	3 oz	23 g
Egg	2 large	12 g
Turkey	3 oz	20 g
Pork	3 oz	18 g
Seafood	Serving Size	Protein Content
Cod	3 oz	15 g
Salmon	3 oz	21 g
Halibut	3 oz	19 g
Tilapia	3 oz	22 g
Shrimp	3 oz	19 g
Tuna	3 oz	24 g
Nuts, Seeds, & Soy Products	Serving Size	Protein Content
Almonds	1 oz	6 g
Beans	½ cup	7 g
Edamame	1 cup	17 g
Hummus	2 tablespoons	2 g
Peanut butter	2 tablespoons	7 g
Refried beans	½ cup	7 g
Tempeh	½ cup	15 g
Tofu	½ cup	10 g
Dairy	Serving Size	Protein Content
Cottage cheese	½ cup	13 g
Yogurt (low-fat, plain)	1 cup	9 g
Cow's milk	1 cup	8 g
Cheddar cheese	1 oz	7 g

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Please note that the information contained in this newsletter is to provide readers with health and diet information, but is not intended to be used as medical advice for individual health problems. Sources: Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025,

<https://fdc.nal.usda.gov/>, [USDA Nutrient Content list: Protein](#)