

After Bariatric Surgery: Protein

Eating enough protein after bariatric surgery is important because:

- Protein helps you heal after surgery.
- Protein can help you feel full when you're eating smaller portions.
- It helps reduce the amount of muscle you lose while you are losing weight.
- Protein also helps you build muscle again after you have lost weight.

Eating foods higher in protein can help you meet your protein needs and maintain your strength. This handout can help you eat enough protein.

How much protein do I need?

Your dietitian will let you know how much protein you need. Everyone needs a different amount of protein after surgery.

You need _____ grams of protein each day.

How would I know if I'm not getting enough protein?

Signs that you're not eating enough protein:

- hair loss
- nails that are weak or grow poorly
- dry skin
- poor wound healing or infection
- loss of muscle mass and strength

Tips to get enough protein

Choose higher protein foods more often.

- At all your meals and snacks, choose foods from the Protein foods group on page 2.
- Compare the protein amounts in similar kinds of foods. Choose the foods higher in protein.

Know how much protein is in the food you eat.

- The Nutrition Facts table on the food package tells you the serving size and the amount of protein per serving.
- If your food doesn't have a Nutrition Facts table, the food list on the back of this handout may tell you how much protein is in that food.

Nutrition Facts	
Per ½ cup (125 mL)	
Calories 80	% Daily Value*
Fat 2 g	3 %
Saturated 1.0 g	6 %
+Trans 0.2 g	
Carbohydrate 5 g	
Fibre 1 g	4 %
Sugars 4 g	4 %
Protein 10 g	
Cholesterol 5 mg	
Sodium 50 mg	2 %
Potassium 150 mg	3 %
Calcium 300 mg	23 %
Iron 0 mg	0 %

*5% or less is a little, 15% or more is a lot

Record what you eat and drink.

- Write down the portion and the amount of protein for everything you eat and drink during the day.
- Add up how much protein you have each day.

Talk to your dietitian if you think you're not eating enough protein.

- Some people may need a nutrition supplement (powder or drink) to meet their protein needs.
- If you need a supplement, your dietitian can help you find the type and amount that's best for you.

Protein in common food and drinks

You can use this food list to help you eat more protein.

	Food and drinks	Protein (grams)
Protein foods:	meat, poultry, or fish, 1 oz (30 g) or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 mL)	7
	shrimp, boiled or steamed, 6 medium (30 g)	7
	egg, large (1) or liquid egg substitute, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 mL)	6
	tofu (soy), regular, firm, or extra firm, 65 g cubes or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 mL)	6
	soy beans (edamame), 48 g or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 mL)	6
	lentils, canned or cooked, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 mL)	5
	beans, kidney or black, canned or cooked, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 mL)	3–4
	tofu (soy), soft or silken, 65 g cubes or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 mL)	3
	chickpeas, canned or cooked, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 mL)	3
	hummus, 1 Tbsp (15 mL)	1
	yogurt, Greek or Icelandic type, 100 g (100 mL)	8–10
	cottage or ricotta cheese, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 mL)	6–7
	cheese: cheddar, mozzarella, or Swiss, 1 oz (30 g)	7–8
	milk, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)	5
Grain foods	fortified soy beverage, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)	4
	yogurt (100 g) or yogurt drinks, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)	3–4
	higher protein instant oatmeal, 1 packet (38 g)	6
	cold cereal, labelled as high protein, 30 g	5–7
	quinoa, cooked, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)	5–6
Oils and fats	bread, toasted, whole grain, 1 slice	3–4
	cooked cereal: whole grain, oats and oatmeal, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)	2
	nuts, 30–35 g or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 mL)	5
	nut butters or seed butters, 1 Tbsp (15 mL)	3–4
Nutrition supplements (ask your dietitian)	hemp seed hearts, 1 Tbsp (15 mL)	3
	seeds: flax, sesame, sunflower, pumpkin, or chia, 1 Tbsp (15 mL)	1–2
	nutrition supplement drinks, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 mL)	5–10
My higher protein foods	protein powder: whey, soy, hemp, or pea, 1 Tbsp (15 mL)	5–6
	skim milk powder, 1 Tbsp (15 mL)	2

Notes: The amount of protein in each serving varies depending on the brand.

Vegetables and fruits contain only small amounts of protein, so they are not listed here.