



# Protein & Your Diet

Following Stroke



## What is Protein?

Building blocks for growth and repairing cells like those in your muscles, skin and nails.



Meats



Seafood



Tofu



Dairy



Nuts



Legumes/Beans

## Why is Protein Important?

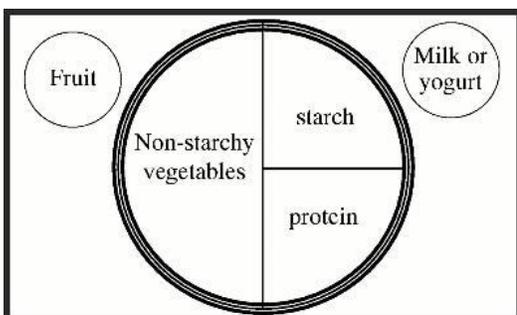
- Foods high in protein are useful when you:
  - Are underweight
  - Have lost weight without trying
  - Have a poor appetite
  - Feeling full after only a small meal
  - Find it difficult to eat large meals due to shortness of breath
- Ongoing muscle and body fat loss can result in:
  - Increased risk to infections
  - Delayed wound healing
  - Muscle weakness
- High protein foods can help maintain and build muscles and body tissues.

## Choose products with low sodium content

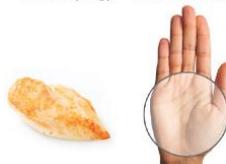
- Processed meats such as ham, sausages, hot dogs, deli meats have added sodium
- Check the ingredient list and nutrition facts label to choose products low in sodium. Look for a Daily Value (DV) of 5% or less
- When purchasing canned fish, legumes/beans, look for “low sodium” or “no salt added” options.
- Thoroughly rinse and drain canned fish, legumes/beans to reduce your sodium intake.

## How much protein?

Spread out your protein throughout the day by including a source of protein at each meal and snack.



**Meat and Poultry**  
2½ oz (75g) = Palm of hand



**Fish**  
2½ oz (75g) = Palm of hand



**Peanut butter**  
2 tbsp (30 mL) = 2 thumbs



**Nuts and seeds**  
1/4 cup (60 mL) = Cupped hand



**Legumes**  
3/4 cup (175 mL) = 1 fist



## How do I include plant proteins?

Peanut butter or other nut butters can be:

- Spread on your toast, sandwich or crackers
- Blended or swirled into yogurt or hot cereal
- Used as a dip for vegetables or fruit

Add nuts and seeds to your:

- Yogurt for a snack
- Cereal in morning
- Salad at lunch

Incorporate more legumes by:

- Putting kidney beans or chickpeas in salads or rice dishes
- Adding lentils or black beans to soups
- Replacing ground meat with lentils in a chili or lasagna
- Including a bean salad as a side dish
- Using hummus as a dip for bread or vegetables
- Spreading hummus on a sandwich

Tofu or Tempeh

- Tofu can be used as a substitute for meat
- Add tofu to soup, chili, salads and sauces

## Other meal ideas using eggs or milk products:

Eggs

- Mixing hard boiled eggs with mayonnaise for a sandwich spread. The egg white has more protein than the egg yolk.
- Swirl an egg into soup
- Chop up hard boiled eggs into salads
- Use eggs to make omelets and French Toast

Milk and Milk Alternatives

- Select milk or soy beverages
- Cook hot cereal, like oatmeal, in milk
- Have a latte instead of black coffee
- Choose a milk based soup instead of broth
- Choose Greek yogurt which is higher in protein
- Have yogurt as a snack or dessert
- Melt cheese on hamburgers, meatloaf and other meats, poultry, fish, vegetables, scrambled eggs
- Melt cheese into soups, sauces, or mashed potatoes
- Add cheese to sandwiches and salads

## Snack Ideas

- Peanut or almond butter on apple slices/banana
- Unsalted sunflower seeds in a trail mix
- Bean and corn salsa with whole grain chips
- Small handful of unsalted nuts
- ¼ cup hummus with either 4-6 high fibre crackers or ½ whole grain pita or ½ cup chopped carrots
- ¾ cup oven-roasted chickpeas sprinkled with paprika or chili powder. Add a little bit of oil when you roast them
- 1 small bowl of high fibre cereal with ½ cup skim/1% milk/soy beverage.
- ½ cup ricotta or cottage cheese mixed with fruit
- 1 slice of whole grain bread with 1 mini can of tuna or 1 tablespoon almond butter or natural peanut butter
- 1 boiled egg with 1 slice whole grain bread or high fibre crackers