



Protein Cheat Sheet

As we age, we need more protein to stay active, healthy and strong, and to combat the effects perimenopause, menopause and postmenopause.

Widely recognised, recommended amounts for women in this stage of life are:

1.4–2.2 grams of protein per kilogram of bodyweight per day

That's an average of about 0.8 grams per pound of bodyweight a day. So, if you weigh 150 pounds, you should be aiming for 120 grams of protein per day. The more active you are, the more you will need, so if you are super active and weight training over 5 times a week, you would be shooting for the higher end of the scale.

But let's keep it simple: 1 palm = 1 portion

- A standard serving of a high-protein food would be about the size and thickness of the palm of your hand. That's about 20–30 grams of protein.
- Most women will need the equivalent of 3–6 palm-size servings of high-protein foods per day, or roughly 1–2 servings per meal, again depending how active you are. It's about finding what feels right for you.

So which foods are high in protein?

Some foods are high in protein, while others have moderate protein. Moderate-protein foods tend to be higher in other macronutrients like carbs or fat, but can still contribute to daily protein intake. Below is a list with some examples of high and moderate protein foods.

High Protein Foods

- Lean beef
- Lean pork
- Lean game meats (e.g., venison, rabbit)
- Lamb
- Fish
- Shellfish (e.g., shrimp, scallops)
- Poultry (e.g., chicken, turkey, duck)
- Eggs and egg whites
- Cottage cheese
- Greek yoghurt, plain

Moderate Protein Food

Dairy; These foods are lower in protein, but still contribute to the daily total.

- Cheese (typically higher in fat)
- Milk
- Plain yoghurt

Legumes/beans; These tend to be high in carbs and are normally categorised as a carb source.

- Chickpeas, black beans, kidney beans, lentils etc...

Nuts, seeds, nut and legume butters; Tend to be high in fat and classed as a fat source

- Walnuts, almonds, pecans, hemp seeds, pumpkin seeds

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What about protein powder?

Protein powders can help boost your daily protein intake and often contain important nutrients. Look for minimal ingredients and third-party testing when choosing a protein powder. Websites like ConsumerLab.com and Labdoor.com can provide test results.

- **Animal-Sourced Options:** Whey, Casein, Egg/egg white, Beef isolate
- **Plant-Based Options:** Hemp protein, Rice protein, Pea protein, Pumpkin seed protein, Vegan protein blends

Additional Considerations

Here are a few more things to keep in mind when adding more protein to your diet:

- **Protein-rich foods can vary in fat content. It's useful to choose leaner meats** when meals already include one or more fat sources. In general it's better to focus more on lean proteins, like poultry and fish, and get a more moderate intake from meats high in saturated fats, such as bacon, sausage, fatty beef, lamb, and full-fat cheese.
- **Aim to consume a diverse menu, including plant-based proteins**, to get a boost of essential vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and healthy fats.
- **When possible, choose minimally processed sources.** For example, opt for pork fillets instead of highly processed sausages or frankfurters.

Plant-Based Protein Options

If you prefer a plant-based diet, be aware that plant foods don't always contain a full complement of amino acids. It's beneficial to consume a variety of protein sources throughout the day, such as:

- **Beans and legumes** or foods derived from them, like tofu, tempeh, and bean pasta.
- **Higher-protein whole grains**, such as quinoa, amaranth, steel-cut oats, teff, buckwheat, and brown or wild rice.

Many people assume nuts, seeds, and their butters are good sources of protein. However, they are mainly fat sources. Always check the labels for protein content.

A plant-based protein powder can be a handy and healthy option, especially if you also add fruits and vegetables into a protein smoothie.

Focus on attainable, sustainable goals

It's crucial to focus on setting realistic and sustainable goals. Begin by simply incorporating an extra serving of protein into just one meal or snack each day, working your way up to the suggested 3–6 palm-sized portions daily.

And remember: One Portion = One Palm

