Protein (for kids)

Builds and repairs muscles and tissues · supports immune function · creates essential enzymes and hormones that power your body and brain

How much protein do I need?

Growing children, especially those in sports, need about **0.5 grams (g) of protein for every pound** of body weight each day. It's ok to go higher, but focus on having a small amount with every meal and snack to balance blood sugar.

- 1 egg — **6 g**
- 1 cup Greek yogurt — **20 g**
- 1 cup milk — **8 g**
- 1 cup soy milk — **7 g**
- 2 tablespoons *peanut butter — **8 g**
- 4 oz chicken breast — **28 g**
- 1 cup *chickpeas — **14 g**
- 6 oz firm *tofu — **16 g**
- 1/2 cup cottage cheese — **15 g**
- 4 oz shrimp — **24 g**
- 1/2 cup *black beans — **8 g**
- 1/4 cup *almonds or walnuts — **5 g**
- 1 slice cheese — **5 g**
- 1/3 cup *hummus — **7 g**
- 1/2 cup *refried beans — **6 g**

*May also contain carbohydrates.

Spread it out

Plan to have protein at every meal and snack — the body absorbs it best in smaller doses throughout the day rather than one large serving.

*Plant-based options

Beans, lentils, tofu, edamame, and nut butters are excellent plant-based protein sources that also provide fiber and healthy fats. Be sure to count the carbs in these!

Talk to your care team

Ask your dietitian about the right protein target for your child's age, weight, and activity level.

Sample Day

for a 100 lb child with a goal of 50 g

- 1 cup milk with granola and fruit — **8 g**
- 2 eggs with toast and cheese — **18 g**
- 1 tbsp peanut butter with an apple or banana — **4 g**
- 1 can tuna salad with crackers — **20 g**
- 1 cup black beans in tortilla soup — **14 g**

Sample day total: ~64 g ✓