

# Go Lean with Protein

When we think about the Protein Foods group, we typically think about animal protein such as chicken, beef, or pork. We can also get protein from plants. Which of these do you regularly eat?



## PLANT PROTEIN

Beans (black, pinto, navy, kidney, etc.)  
Soy beans (edamame)  
Tofu

Tempeh  
Black-eyed peas  
Hummus  
Lentils

Nuts  
Seeds  
Peanut butter



## ANIMAL PROTEIN

Beef  
Pork  
Chicken

Turkey  
Lamb  
Fish

Shellfish  
Eggs

## Eat a variety and keep it lean.

Animal proteins can be high in saturated fat, which has been linked to higher risk for heart disease. Some cuts of meat are naturally leaner than others. Choose cuts of beef and pork with less visible fat, and trim away fat or skin from chicken and turkey. Fish and seafood are low in saturated fat. Some even contain fats that are healthy for the heart. Plant protein foods are also great choices. They are low in saturated fat and often high in fiber.

**We can easily meet our daily protein needs by eating a variety of foods from plant and/or animal sources.** Take a look at the Nutrition Facts for the foods on the following page and compare the differences:

Funded in part by the USDA SNAP. For more information, call MU Extension's Show Me Nutrition line at 1-888-515-0016. Need help stretching your food dollars? Contact your local resource center or go online to [mydss.mo.gov/food-assistance](http://mydss.mo.gov/food-assistance)

<b>Protein Food</b>	<b>Protein (grams)</b>	<b>Saturated Fat (grams)</b>	<b>Fiber (grams)</b>
Roasted chicken (without skin, 3 oz.)			
Black beans (1/2 cup cooked)			
Tofu (1/2 cup)			
Canned tuna in water (3 oz.)			
Hot dog (2 oz.)			
Pork chop (3 oz.)			

## How much do you need?

People age 9 and older need between 5 and 6 ½ ounce-equivalents of protein foods each day. This number may be higher for those who are very active.

## What counts as one ounce-equivalent?

In general, 1 ounce of meat, poultry or fish, ¼ cup cooked beans, 1 egg, 1 tablespoon of peanut butter, or ½ ounce of nuts or seeds can be considered as 1 ounce-equivalent from the Protein Foods group.

<b>Protein food</b>	<b>Amount that = 1 ounce-equivalent of protein</b>	<b>Common portions and ounce-equivalents (oz-equiv)</b>
Meats	1 ounce cooked beef or pork	1 small steak = 3 ½ to 4 oz-equiv 1 small hamburger = 2 to 3 oz-equiv
Poultry	1 ounce cooked chicken or turkey 1 slice of deli turkey	1 small chicken breast (size of deck of cards) = 3 oz-equiv
Seafood	1 ounce cooked fish or shellfish	1 can of tuna, drained = 3 to 4 oz-equiv 1 salmon steak = 4 to 6 oz-equiv 5-10 shrimp (depending on size) = 4 oz-equiv
Eggs	1 egg	3 egg whites = 2 oz-equiv 3 egg yolks = 1 oz-equiv
Nuts	½ ounce of nuts (12 almonds, 24 pistachios, 7 walnut halves) 1 tablespoon peanut or almond butter	1 ounce of nuts = 2 oz equiv
Seeds	½ ounce of seeds (such as pumpkin or sunflower)	1 ounce of seeds = 2 oz-equiv
Beans, peas, and lentils	¼ cup cooked beans, peas, or lentils 2 tablespoons hummus	1 cup split pea soup = 1 oz-equiv 1 cup lentil soup = 2 oz-equiv 1 cup bean soup = ¾ oz-equiv
Soy	¼ cup (2 oz.) tofu ¼ cup shelled soybeans	1 soy burger patty = 2 oz-equiv

## Keep it safe.

Risk of foodborne illness is higher with protein foods, so it's important to practice safe food handling practices. Keep raw meat, poultry, and seafood away from ready-to-eat foods; and wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water after handling. Be sure to cook these foods to the recommended temperatures. You can use a food thermometer to make sure your food is fully cooked.