

Eating a protein-rich diet



To improve your health, you've been advised to eat protein-rich foods. This fact sheet will help you do that.

What is a protein-rich diet?

It's a diet focused on foods and beverages with a high concentration of protein. Every bite is doubly nutritious!

What role does protein play?

Among other things, protein helps build and repair muscle and tissue, heal wounds, and support your immune system.

Why do I need a protein-rich diet?

This type of diet can help your body replenish its reserves and get strong again. Here are some situations in which such a diet can be useful:

- > You're eating normally, but you're losing weight or getting weaker.
- > You're eating less because you've lost your appetite.
- > Your body needs more energy to recover from surgery, an infection, a wound, or illness.

Are there any contraindications?

A high-protein diet may be contraindicated for people with kidney problems (kidney failure). Ask your doctor or nutritionist if this type of diet is appropriate for your situation.

How can I add more protein to my diet?

Make sure to eat 3 meals and 2 or 3 snacks every day. Here are some high-protein foods and beverages that you should include as much as possible:

BREAKFAST

- 250 ml (1 cup) of **milk, soy milk, or chocolate milk**. Add more to your coffee, cereal, or oatmeal.
- **2 eggs**, cooked however you like them!



- 175 g (3/4 cup) of **yogurt** or 125 g (1/2 cup) of **Greek yogurt**. Eat it plain, or with cereal or fruit.
- 50 g (about the size of 2 fingers) of **cheese**. Eat it on its own, or with toast, or add it to your omelettes.
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) of **creamy peanut butter**. Spread it on toast, muffins, or bagels, or add it to a fruit smoothie.



LUNCH AND SUPPER

- 75 g (2 oz.) of **meat, chicken, or seafood**. Eat a portion that is at least the size of the palm of your hand. Don't hesitate to use canned versions of these foods.
- **2 eggs**. Add them to your salads, sandwiches, sauces, or soups.
- 150 g (3/4 cup) of **tofu or tempeh**. Put some in your soups, salads, stews, or tomato sauce.
- 50 g (1.5 oz.) of **cheese**. Grate some onto your favorite meals, or add some to your sauces, sandwiches, salads, or to mashed potatoes, omelettes, etc.
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) of **skim milk powder or protein powder**, which you can buy from the pharmacy. Add some to your prepared meals.



SNACKS

Consider including: milk, chocolate milk, soy milk, yogurt, Greek yogurt, cheese, pudding, silken tofu, blancmange, creamy peanut butter or nut butter, etc.



Can I eat legumes and nuts?

Legumes, nuts and seeds are very good sources of protein. However, they can be difficult to digest for some people. They may also be contraindicated for people with digestive disorders.

Ask your doctor or nutritionist if you can eat them. If you want to add them to your meals, do so gradually.

General tips to help you, even if you have a small appetite

- > Eat several small meals and snacks each day.
- > Drink less liquid before and during meals.
- > Season your food to add flavour.
- > Keep your favourite foods on hand.
- > Eat at times of the day when you have the most appetite.
- > Stimulate your appetite with a little exercise, such as a short walk, before meals.
- > Make mealtimes a pleasant time to relax with soft music, a nicely set table, friends, or television, etc.



Can a bottle of nutritional supplement replace a meal?

Most nutritional supplements are not enough to replace a full meal. They can supplement a meal or serve as a snack.

Who can I contact for help or to ask questions?

A nutritionist can answer all your questions about food. Ask your doctor or nurse who you can contact for a nutrition consultation:

Name:

Tel.:



USEFUL RESOURCES

Eating Well When You Have Cancer.
Document produced by the Canadian Cancer Society.

Available free on the website:

> **cancer.ca**

Type "eating well" in the search box

Popotes roulantes (Meals on wheels):
Ask at your local CLSC or contact the Regroupement des popotes roulantes directly at:

> **1 877 277-2722**

> **popotes.org** [in French]

Ordre des diététistes nutritionnistes du Québec. To find a nutritionist in the private sector near you:

> **514 393-3733**

> **1 888 393-8528** (toll free)

> **odnq.org** [in French]

Other health sheets published by the CHUM are available. Ask for those that might fit your situation.



You can also find them on our website

chumontreal.qc.ca/fiches-sante



Questions

The content of this document in no way replaces the recommendations and diagnoses made, or the treatment suggested by your health professional.

To find out more about the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal
chumontreal.qc.ca