

# March is Nutrition Month

## Focus on Protein Foods

### For Families with Children



Protein supports children's growth and development. Offering protein foods at meals and snacks helps children feel fuller for longer, giving them the energy they need to learn and play.



Canada's food guide plate

- Foods that have higher amounts of protein are grouped together as protein foods in Canada's food guide.
- Aim for ¼ of the plate to come from protein foods at each meal and snack.
- Serve a variety of protein foods each day. Different protein foods provide different vitamins and minerals important for health. Some provide iron, while others are a source of calcium and vitamin D.
- Try to include plant-based protein foods more often. Plant-based protein foods provide more fibre and are a source of healthy fats which support digestion and overall health.



## Protein Foods

Protein foods can come from plant or animal sources.

### Plant-Based:

- Beans
- Lentils
- Nuts
- Peas
- Seeds
- Soy foods such as tofu, edamame, and fortified soy beverage



### Animal-Based:

- Dairy products
- Eggs
- Fish
- Lean meats
- Poultry
- Wild game



## Tips to Include Protein Foods

- Blend yogurt, cottage cheese, or silken tofu into smoothies.
- Dip fruit in yogurt or nut butter\*.
- Serve milk to drink with meals.
- Add whole or blended beans into soups or sauces.
- Coat poultry or fish in breadcrumbs and bake in the oven to make homemade chicken fingers or fish sticks.



\*Check school or childcare centre food allergy policies before packing.

## Saving Money on Protein Foods

Choose the tips that fit your lifestyle best.

- Beans, lentils, and split peas are lower cost protein choices.
- Eggs often cost less than meat.
- Buying yogurt in a large tub usually costs less than buying several single-serve containers.
- Canned or frozen fish is often less expensive than fresh.
- Plan meals based on what is on sale each week. Use flyers to check for sales at your local grocery store.

## Additional Information



Canada's food guide: Eat protein foods



Canada's food guide: Food guide kitchen



Nutrition Handouts Search: 'Protein'



Health Link 811 for nutrition information

➡ Scan the QR code or click on the text to learn more.