

# Protein

Protein helps build and repair muscle tissue, fight disease, manage hunger, and perform other essential tasks. This food group includes seafood, meats, poultry, eggs, nuts, seeds, and soy foods and beverages. Try to include at least one non-meat source of protein every day. Plant proteins are very nutrient dense.

Protein Source	1 ounce counts for:
Plant Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ½ cup cooked quinoa</li><li>• ¼ cup cooked beans, edamame, peas or lentils</li><li>• ¼ cup tofu</li><li>• ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) nuts or seeds</li><li>• 1 tablespoon nut or seed butter</li></ul>
Lean Animal Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 ounce cooked chicken or turkey (without skin), or cooked lean beef or pork</li></ul>
Eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 egg</li></ul>
Fish & Seafood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 ounce cooked fish or shell fish</li></ul>

## Make animal protein choices lean

Choose lean animal proteins most of the time. Poultry (chicken and turkey) is leaner than red meat (beef) or processed meats (e.g., sausage). Consider using a food scale to weigh animal protein, at least until you are more familiar with recommended portion sizes by sight. Another option is to use a deck of cards to estimate 3 ounces of meat.

