

# Nutrition Protein Guide

*For people with liver disease*

## Why do I need extra protein?

Eating a diet that is rich in high-quality protein is very important for people with liver disease. Protein helps build and repair muscles. It also helps heal infections.

## How much protein should I eat?

Ask your doctor how many grams (g) of protein you should eat every day. Most times, target goals for people with liver disease are:

- **For each meal:** 21 to 28 g protein
- **For each snack:** 7 to 14 g protein

The goal is to eat **80 to 100 g of protein a day**. To reach this goal, eat **11 to 13 servings of protein** spread throughout the day.

## Which foods are highest in protein?

Choose foods from the table on this page to increase the protein in your diet. **The amount in 1 serving is listed beneath each photo. Each serving provides 7 g protein.**

		
3 oz (21 g) meat, fish, or poultry (deck of cards)	6 oz regular yogurt	1/2 cup beans
		
1/3 cup canned tuna	3 oz Greek yogurt	1/3 cup edamame
		
1 oz hard cheese	1 cup milk	1 oz pumpkin and sunflower seeds
		
3 oz (21 g) firm tofu (deck of cards)	1 1/2 cups ice cream	1/3 cup hummus
		
1 egg or 2 egg whites	1 oz (24 nuts) almonds	2 tbsp peanut butter

## Sample Menus for People with Cirrhosis of the Liver

These sample menus include 3 meals and 3 snacks. They include at least 2 options for each. A full day's menu provides a total of 2,000 calories, 100 g protein, and 2,000 mg sodium. **Limit your sodium (salt) intake to no more than 2,000 mg a day.**

	Calories	Protein	Sodium
<b>Breakfast</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 to 2 pieces whole wheat toast with 2 tbsp peanut butter</li> <li>• 6 oz Greek yogurt</li> </ul>	350	23 g	350 mg
<b>OR</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup oatmeal with a little butter, cinnamon, and 4 oz 2% milk</li> <li>• ½ banana or fruit of choice</li> <li>• 1 scrambled egg</li> </ul>	390	20 g	465 mg
<b>Lunch</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ¼ cup tuna salad (no-salt added tuna) on wheat bread (try Dave's Killer Bread Thins)</li> </ul>	550	27 g	700 mg
<b>OR</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grilled Swiss cheese sandwich (2 oz. cheese) on wheat bread</li> <li>• ½ cup low-sodium tomato soup</li> </ul>	480	20 g	500 mg
<b>Dinner</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 oz chicken breast, seasoned with Mrs. Dash and a drizzle of olive oil</li> <li>• 1 cup steamed veggies with lemon juice and a little butter or olive oil</li> <li>• 1 cup sweet potato</li> </ul>	350	30 g	175 mg
<b>OR</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup pasta with 4 oz ground turkey and low-sodium tomato sauce, seasoned with Mrs. Dash or your favorite herbs</li> <li>• 1 cup steamed veggies or salad with vinegar and oil dressing</li> </ul>	550	23 g	300 mg
<b>Snacks</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 oz Ensure High Protein</li> </ul>	160	16 g	170 mg
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kind Bar + Protein xl</li> </ul>	225	7 to 10 g	50 mg
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 oz Swiss cheese with an apple or unsalted crackers</li> </ul>	350	16 g	60 to 170 mg
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greek yogurt with ⅛ to ¼ cup granola</li> </ul>	300	17 g	120 mg
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ peanut butter and jelly sandwich on wheat bread</li> </ul>	325	10 g	220 mg

## Recipe Ideas

- Kidney-healthy recipes from Northwest Kidney Center: [www.nwkidney.org/living-with-kidney-disease/recipes](http://www.nwkidney.org/living-with-kidney-disease/recipes)
- Low-sodium recipes from "Sodium Girl": [www.sodiumgirl.com](http://www.sodiumgirl.com)

## Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your dietitian or diet technician if you have questions or concerns.