

Family Nutrition Newsletter

May 2022



Importance of Protein in a Child's Diet

Protein is one of the three major macronutrients that we eat. It helps us build muscle, provides us with a little bit of energy, and performs MANY functions in the body.

Along with muscle building, the building blocks of the protein foods we eat are used to:

- make red blood cells,
- make hormones needed for proper growth and development,
- form enzymes that we need to break down foods and perform basic body functions, and
- create antibodies so we can fight off infection.

Children ages 4-6 need roughly **3-5 ounces** of protein daily for proper growth and development. Children between the ages of 7-12 need **4-5.5 ounces** each day.

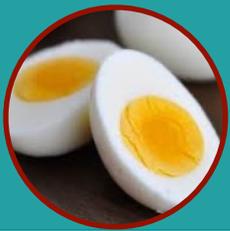


Check out these great grab-and-go protein options for lunchboxes and snacks:



Peanut butter and other **nut butters** are a great protein option. You can even buy ready to go pouches at the store. One tablespoon of peanut butter is considered 1 oz of protein. **SunButter** is available for children with peanut and tree nut allergies.

Greek yogurt has more protein, and often less added sugar, than regular yogurt. You can find them in individual sized tubs, tubes, and pouches making snack time easy!



Hard boiled eggs can be made in advance and safely kept in the fridge for up to one week. One large egg is equivalent to one ounce of protein. Peel them ahead of time for a super easy lunch for little ones.

Deli meat roll ups are easy enough for kids to make themselves. The meat can be eaten by itself, wrapped around string cheese for a serving of dairy, or wrapped around vegetables.



Hummus is a creamy dip made from chickpeas and tahini, a pasta made from sesame seeds. A two ounce container contains roughly 4 grams of protein. Pair with some veggie sticks or whole grain pretzels for a great high fiber snack!

Tuna fish is not only high protein, but it also has amazing omega-3 fatty acids! You can find individual serving pouches that are safe on pantry shelves for a long time, so no refrigeration needed until the pouch is opened.



String cheese is packed with both protein and calcium, helping kids build strong muscles AND strong bones! Individual wrapping makes it an easy, no mess snack to pack in lunch boxes or grab when on the run.

Nuts and seeds contain protein along with fiber and omega-3 fatty acids. Prepare them in advance by packing them in ready-to-go two ounce plastic containers.

