



Protein for Children

Protein is particularly important for kids in times of growth. Most Australians consume enough protein within their diet, except for some people following a vegetarian diet.

Major functions of protein in the body

Protein is a vital part of all body cells – most people realise protein is found in muscles, however few recognise it is present in the kidney, heart and liver, in skin, hair, nails bone and teeth. Protein is always needed in larger quantities during times of growth, especially during times of childhood, adolescence, and pregnancy. Protein is also needed for fluid balance, blood clotting, hormone and enzyme production, and immune function. The body constantly breaks down proteins and recreates new ones; dietary intake needs to account for about 1/3 of this, and the remaining protein synthesis comes from proteins broken down in the body.

The best sources of protein come from the following foods. These are mainly animal based products, with the exception of soy beans:

Beef, lamb, veal, pork	Skinless poultry	Eggs
Low fat dairy products (for children over 2 years of age)	Fish and seafood	Soybeans

For children following a mixed diet, these foods provide about 2/3 of daily protein intake.

Good sources of protein include Cereals, Bread, Legumes, Nuts, Seeds

Most children will meet their protein requirement if they have one serve of lean meat, fish, poultry, nuts and legumes, as well as 2 – 3 serves of milk, yoghurt, and cheese daily.

(One serve of meat and alternatives is equal to one of: 65 – 100g cooked meat / chicken, 80 – 120g cooked fish, 2 small eggs, 1/3 cup legumes (eg. lentils, chick peas), or 1/3 cup nuts. One serve of milk and alternatives is equal to: 250mL (one cup) of milk, yoghurt, or soy milk, 200g of yoghurt, or 40g (2 slices) of cheese).

Protein Sources

	MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES Each of the following contains 6 g of protein		MILK PRODUCTS Each of the following contains 3 g of protein		CEREALS AND GRAIN FOODS Each of the following contains 3 g of protein
20 g	Meat cooked	100 ml	Whole milk	1 Slice	Bread
20 g	Poultry (chicken, turkey, duck etc.) cooked	75 ml	"Rev or Skinny" milk	½ average	Muffin
30 g	Fish cooked or tinned	50 ml	"Physical" milk	1 Small	Scone
25 g	Shellfish cooked	100 ml	Soy milk (full or light)	1 average	Crumpet
25 g	Offal (liver, tripe, kidney, brain etc.) cooked	4 Tb	Custard (from powder and whole milk)	½ average	Bread Roll
50 g	Soft cheese (ricotta, cottage, cream cheese etc.)	3 Tb	Custard (from egg and whole milk)	½ average	Croissant
1	Egg (55 g)	1 Scoop	Ice cream (average)	4	"Thin Captains"
40 g	Nuts	50 g	Natural yoghurt (full cream)	4	"Sao"
25 g	Peanuts	40 g	Natural yoghurt (low fat)	4	"Low Salt Vitaweets"
90 g	Legumes (dried beans and lentils) cooked	70 g	Fruit yoghurt (full cream)	4	Crispbreads
		50 g	Fruit yoghurt (low fat)	3	Rice cakes

(Source: "Low protein diet" pamphlet produced by Baxter Healthcare PTY LTD)