

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
Breakfast			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 to 2 pieces whole wheat toast with 2 tbsp peanut butter 6 oz Greek yogurt 	350	23 g	350 mg
OR			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 cup oatmeal with a little butter, cinnamon, and 4 oz 2% milk 1/2 banana or fruit of choice 1 scrambled egg 	390	20 g	465 mg
Lunch			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1/4 cup tuna salad (no-salt added tuna) on wheat bread (try Dave's Killer Bread Thins) 	550	27 g	700 mg
OR			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grilled Swiss cheese sandwich (2 oz. cheese) on wheat bread 1/2 cup low-sodium tomato soup 	480	20 g	500 mg
Dinner			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 oz chicken breast, seasoned with Mrs. Dash and a drizzle of olive oil 1 cup steamed veggies with lemon juice and a little butter or olive oil 1 cup sweet potato 	350	30 g	175 mg
OR			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 cup pasta with 4 oz ground turkey and low-sodium tomato sauce, seasoned with Mrs. Dash or your favorite herbs 1 cup steamed veggies or salad with vinegar and oil dressing 	550	23 g	300 mg
Snacks			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 oz Ensure High Protein 	160	16 g	170 mg
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kind Bar + Protein x1 	225	7 to 10 g	50 mg
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 oz Swiss cheese with an apple or unsalted crackers 	350	16 g	60 to 170 mg
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greek yogurt with 1/8 to 1/4 cup granola 	300	17 g	120 mg
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1/2 peanut butter and jelly sandwich on wheat bread 	325	10 g	220 mg

Recipe Ideas

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

Questions?

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