

# Protein-rich meals for muscle health



## Why do we need protein?

### 1. Protein and physical activity work together to maintain muscle health



Physical activity stimulates the muscles and protein-rich foods provide building blocks for growth and repair.



Physical activity, such as strength, balance and aerobic exercise, each provide different benefits important for muscle function.



Muscle health is also important for heart, immune and bone health.

### 2. Protein-rich foods make satisfying and nutritious meals making every bite count. This is useful for:



People with small appetites e.g. fussy kids, elderly, injured or unwell.



Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight, together with regular physical activity.

## Why is protein important at every meal?

Having protein at every meal across the day makes it easier for the body to use protein and optimise the benefits gained from physical activity.

**Have 3 to 4 protein-rich meals across the day e.g.**



## Which protein food is best?

Protein foods also provide essential nutrients important for good health. Choosing a variety of different proteins is an easy way to get enough of these nutrients.



**Lean red meat**  
every second day  
for iron & zinc



**Dairy**  
3 to 4 serves per  
day for calcium



**Fish**  
twice a week for  
omega-3



**Legumes**  
twice a week for  
dietary fibre



**Eggs & Poultry**  
on other days

# How to get enough protein at each meal?

You will need **one portion of protein** to make a protein rich meal. This portion size guide explains 3 ways to make up **one portion of protein** (equivalent to 25-30g protein) by choosing different types and amounts of a variety of foods.

	Choose any 1	Choose any 2	Choose any 3
Beef, lamb or pork	1 small steak, diced or other fresh meat (150g*)	Mince (75g*)	1 slice roast meat (25g**)
Fish	1 fillet (150g*)	1 small can of fish (95g)	1 slice smoked salmon
Chicken	½ breast (150g*)	Thigh (75g*)	1 slice roast meat (25g**)
Eggs		2 eggs	1 egg
Dairy foods		2 slices cheese (40g) ½ cup ricotta cheese (120g) 1 glass milk (250ml)	Feta cheese (40g) ¼ cup cottage cheese (60g) ½ cup yoghurt (100g)
Legumes	200g firm tofu	1 cup cooked (175g) lentils, chickpeas	½ cup hummus ½ cup cooked (90g) 3 bean mix
Nuts and seeds		½ cup nuts and seeds (60g)	1 tb nut or seed paste

\*raw weight  
\*\*cooked weight

## Meal ideas

San Choy Bau



150g\* mince = **1 portion**

Omelette



40g cheese + 2 eggs  
= **1 portion**

Burrito Bowl



25g\*\* mince + 100g yoghurt  
+ 175g kidney beans  
= **1 portion**

Grilled Fish and Vegetables



150g\* fish fillet = **1 portion**

Lamb and Lentil Salad



75g\* lamb + 175g cooked lentils  
= **1 portion**

Wrap and dessert



25g\*\* roast meat,  
½ cup hummus + 100g yoghurt  
= **1 portion**