

Protein and Exercise:

Small Steps Can Help Ensure Your Fitness Goals

Whether your goal is maintaining a toned and healthy body or aging healthfully, protein can benefit your active lifestyle:

- **Build more lean muscle.** A higher protein diet along with resistance exercise can help build healthy muscles and support weight management.
- **Reduce muscle loss during aging.** Protein can help preserve muscle as you age.
- **Enhance muscle recovery after resistance exercise or weight training.**
 - *If you're a regular exerciser*, consuming high-quality dairy protein may help nourish your muscles after a tough workout.
 - *If you're a serious athlete*, consuming carbohydrates and high-quality dairy protein together, after intense exercise, may enhance the replacement of muscle energy stores. The result is a faster recovery in preparation for your next workout.

Protein is a smart choice for your active lifestyle

Protein is an excellent workout partner. When consumed as part of a resistance training program, it can help you meet your goal for more lean muscle.

How much protein, paired with regular exercise, do I need to support my muscles?

Consuming approximately 20 to 30 grams of high-quality protein at each meal can help you build and maintain muscle. Each example below will provide 20 grams of protein or more.*

- Eating 2, 6-ounce containers of Greek-style yogurt
- Adding 2 ounces of your favorite cheese and a chopped egg to a salad
- Combining approximately 2 ounces of cheese and ½ cup beans (e.g., black or pinto) to a veggie burrito
- Choosing 3 to 4 ounces of lean beef, pork or poultry

*Look for lower fat cheese and low-fat or fat-free yogurt



Did you know...?

Low-fat chocolate milk is a great way to fuel up after a hard workout! A good source of **high-quality protein**, chocolate milk is packed with nine essential nutrients and can help replenish what the body has lost through sweat. It also has the right carb-to-protein ratio that many athletes look for post-workout.

Get recipes that include protein at wheyprotein.nationaldairyCouncil.org and nationaldairyCouncil.org.

