Protein Throughout the Day

Get the most from food choices

Are you getting the most from your food choices? If your family leads a busy lifestyle, like most Americans, your child needs to have nutrition-packed meals and snacks. Protein is an important part of optimizing nutrition throughout the day.

Is dinnertime when your family tends to eat most of their protein? Many experts suggest it may be better to spread out protein-containing foods more evenly across meals and snacks to get the benefits associated with higher-protein diets.

Breakfast—the most important meal of the day

Breakfast is a hugely important meal, because it’s the time to refuel the body after a night’s sleep. Increasing protein intake at breakfast, which is typically lower in protein than other meals, may help optimize the benefits of protein. Eating foods that contain protein as part of a balanced breakfast not only helps break the all-night fast, but also gets your child started on the right path for the day.

Tips for getting more protein on the go

Including dairy in between meals can be a great way to help children achieve a higher-protein diet. Try these tips for snacking on the go with dairy.*

• Yogurt containers are perfectly sized to stash in a backpack or tote bag on the way out the door. You can put the yogurt in the fridge at a child care facility for later.**

• Choose milk as a snack choice because of its versatility, nutrition and convenience. Plus, a serving of milk, whether flavored or not, has as much protein as a handful of nuts. Remember that chocolate milk is always a healthy favorite with kids!

• Portion out chunks of cheese,** as they will be ready to eat any time and anywhere. String cheese is also a great option to grab on the go.

• Get recipes that include protein by visiting the “Recipes” section of wheyprotein.nationaldairycouncil.org and nationaldairycouncil.org.

*Choose lowfat or fat-free milk, yogurt and lower-fat varieties of cheese.

**Check the label for proper refrigeration for yogurt and soft cheeses.