



Taking charge of your kidney disease



A guide to healthier eating for dialysis patients:
high protein foods

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Why is protein important?

Your body needs protein to keep muscles, bones, hair, and skin healthy. Most people get all the protein they need from the foods they eat, but when you're a patient on dialysis, you may need more protein than others. That's because your dialysis treatment removes protein from your body. Not getting enough protein can cause:

- Loss of energy
- Increased risk of infection
- Weight loss

The best sources of protein

Ask your doctor or dietitian about **high quality sources** of protein. This type of protein is easier for your body to use and is found in these foods:



Meat



**Chicken
and turkey**



Fish



Eggs

High protein food guide

Patients on dialysis need a balance of high protein foods. How much protein you need depends on your health, the type of dialysis therapy you're on, and your body weight. Ask your doctor or dietitian to set a daily protein goal for you by filling in the blank below.

To stay healthy, I need _____ ounces of high quality protein foods each day.

When you know your goal, try to work the following foods into your meals.

Include protein in your diet:

- Beef
- Chicken
- Fish
- Veal
- Lamb
- Eggs
- Pork
- Turkey
- Shellfish
- Egg substitutes or egg whites

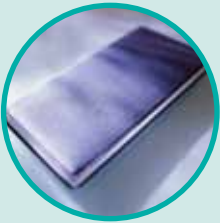
*Please note: As you make your choices, be sure to pick foods that have not been cured or processed. (Some examples of cured and/or processed foods that you should **avoid** are bacon, ham, hot dogs, and deli meats.)*

Know your protein portions

Here's an easy way to estimate how much protein you're getting in a food serving:



- 3 ounces of cooked meat, chicken, or turkey = a deck of cards or the palm of your hand



- 3 ounces of grilled or baked fish = a checkbook
- A chicken leg and thigh or a chicken breast = about 3 ounces of cooked chicken
- ¼ cup of egg whites or tuna = about 1 ounce of protein



Healthy eating means keeping your phosphorus in balance

Most foods, including high protein foods that you need to stay healthy, contain phosphorus. Phosphorus is a mineral that the body needs to build healthy, strong bones, as well as keep other parts of your body healthy. But when too much phosphorus builds up in your body, it can cause damage and make your bones weak.

Phosphate binders help keep your phosphorus in balance because they absorb excess phosphorus from the foods you eat. They should be taken with meals and snacks, as directed by your physician.



Do you need more protein?

Talk to your dietitian about your protein needs. If you need more protein, some ideas may include:

- Eating protein first, before you become full
- Using protein drinks or bars between meals
- Sprinkling protein powder on foods or dissolving it in drinks
- Taking a liquid protein supplement

Eggs: An easy way to add more protein to your diet

In addition to being a great source of protein, eggs can be eaten in a wide variety of ways:

- Scrambled, hard or soft cooked, fried, poached, deviled, or as an omelet
- Serve eggs on toast, English muffin, bagel, pita bread, or wrap
- Add extra eggs to muffins, pancakes, or other baked goods

Sources: Data on file, Genzyme Corp.
USDA National Nutrient Database.

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