



Take a NOURISH Step!

September: The Role of Protein In Diabetes



Did you Know?

Most older adults don't get enough protein daily.

What is Protein?

Protein is an essential nutrient made up of amino acids, which are the building blocks of our muscles, bones, cartilage, and skin. Protein is also important for tissue repair, hormone function, and immune function. It is recommended that older adults consume 1-1.2 g of protein per kilogram of body weight per day. (Weight in lbs. divided by 2.2 = kg)

Common food sources of protein with serving sizes

- 3 oz salmon (17 grams of protein)
- 3 oz chicken (26 grams of protein)
- 3 oz lean beef (20 grams of protein)
- 3 oz pork (23 grams of protein)
- 1 large egg (6 grams of protein)
- 1 cup greek yogurt (17 grams of protein)
- 8 oz glass of milk (8 grams of protein)
- 1 oz cheese (7 grams of protein)
- 2 tbsp peanut butter (8 grams of protein)
- ½ cup beans (~10 grams of protein)
- 3 oz tofu (7 grams of protein)



Protein & Blood Sugars

- Consuming protein at meal-times helps you feel fuller for longer and slows the rise of blood glucose.
- Protein itself does not directly raise blood glucose. Although there is no "best" amount of protein to eat to help with blood sugar management, it is good to aim for 20 g protein/meal.

Protein & Muscle Mass

- Diabetes puts you at a higher risk of muscle loss, which increases as people age. Protein can help build and repair muscles, and increase mobility for things that you love, such as walking, gardening, and hiking.



Importance of Hydration

Hydration supports kidney function as protein intake increases.

***NOURISH stands for: Nutrient-Rich Foods, Omega-3s & Healthy Fats, Understand, Recipes, Increase Protein & Fiber, Sugar & Sodium Awareness, and Hydrate.**

For more information visit: gwaar.org/nourishstep

GWAAR Nutrition Team Trinity Manzke & Molly Ross 9/2026

Greek Cottage Cheese Bowl (2 Servings)

Ingredients

- ½ cup cherry tomatoes (halved)
- ½ small cucumber (diced)
- 4 whole Kalamata olives (sliced)
- ½ TBSP lemon juice
- ½ TBSP red wine vinegar
- ½ tsp olive oil
- ¼ tsp dried oregano
- Pinch black pepper
- Low-fat cottage cheese



Directions

- In a bowl, toss together cherry tomatoes, cucumber, olives, lemon juice, red wine vinegar, olive oil, oregano, and black pepper.
- Divide cottage cheese evenly among 2 bowls. Spoon the Greek salad mixture over each serving.

Carbohydrate & Protein Content

- 9g total carbs
- 15g protein



Recipe adapted from <https://diabetesfoodhub.org/recipes/greek-cottage-cheese-bowl>

Protein Goal Tracker and Daily Calculator

Step 1: Take your body weight in pounds and divide it by 2.2 to get your body weight in kilograms (kg)

_____ lbs / 2.2 = _____ kgs

Step 2: Multiply your weight in kilograms by 1-1.2 to get your protein goal range!

_____ kg x 1 = _____ grams per day

_____ kg x 1.2 = _____ grams per day

Step 3: Write out your protein goal range:

_____ - _____ grams per day



Daily Protein Tracker

Meal	Protein Foods	Goal Protein (g)	Protein Eaten (g)
Breakfast			
Lunch			
Dinner			
Snacks			
Total Grams of Protein			

Table created by: Trinity Manzke & Molly Ross

Keep taking NOURISH Steps and learn more about protein at:

<https://diabetesfoodhub.org/blog/lets-talk-about-protein-people-diabetes>

