



High-Protein Foods: 2 Tablespoon Guide

Small amounts can make a big difference!

Protein needs increase with age. Even small additions throughout the day can support muscle, strength, healing, and energy. This handout shows common high-protein foods in **2 Tbsp portions**, listed from **lowest to highest calories**.

Aim for 25-30 grams of protein at each meal throughout the day to help muscles stay!

2 Tbsp High-Protein Foods (*Calories are approximate and may vary by brand*)

Lowest to Highest Calories

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Nonfat Plain Greek Yogurt ~20 calories ~2-3 g protein | 7. Feta Cheese ~50-70 calories ~5-6 g protein |
| 2. Nonfat Cottage Cheese (blended or small curd) ~25 calories 3-4 g protein | 8. Hemp Seeds (hulled) ~90-120 calories ~5-6.5 g protein |
| 3. Skyr (Icelandic yogurt, nonfat) ~20-30 calories 3-4 g protein | 9. Chia Seeds ~120-140 calories ~4-6 g protein |
| 4. Ricotta Cheese (part-skim) ~40 calories ~3 g protein | 10. Peanut & Almond Butter ~160-180 calories 6-7 g protein |
| 5. Hummus ~50-80 calories ~2 g protein | 11. Tahini (sesame seed paste) ~170-210 calories ~5-8 g protein |
| 6. Peanut Butter Powder (dry) ~50-60 calories ~6 g protein | 12. Sunflower Seed Butter ~180-210 calories ~5-7 g protein |

Best Protein for Fewer Calories

- Nonfat Greek yogurt
- Skyr/Icelandic yogurt, nonfat
- Cottage cheese, nonfat
- Powdered peanut butter

Great choices for increasing protein when trying to maintain or lose weight.



Best for Malnutrition Risk or Unintentional Weight Loss

- Nut and Seed butters
- Fuller fat yogurt & dairy
- Hemp & Chia seeds

*These provide protein **plus** healthy fats for extra calories in small amounts.*



Calcium-Rich Options

- Greek yogurt
- Skyr/Icelandic Yogurt
- Cottage cheese
- Ricotta cheese

Supports bone health and muscle strength with calcium, vitamin D, magnesium & leucine.



Easy Ways to Use 2 Tbsp Protein Foods

- Stir into oatmeal, soup, or mashed potatoes
- Spread on toast, crackers, or fruit
- Blend into smoothies. Sprinkle on yogurt, ice cream
- Add to sauces, dips, casseroles, baked goods, & sprinkle on salads

2 Tbsp Seed Comparison: Calories, Omega-3s, Protein & Fiber

| Food | Calories | Protein (g) | Fiber (g) | Omega-3s (ALA, g) |
|--------------------------------|----------|-------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Flaxseed (ground) | ~70 | ~3 | ~4 | ~3.2 |
| Chia Seeds | ~80-120 | ~3 - 4 | ~ 8 | ~4 |
| Hemp Hearts/Seeds (hulled) | ~120 | ~6 - 7 | ~0.5 | ~0.3 (8 grams Omega 3 & 6) |
| Pepitas (hulled pumpkin seeds) | ~90 | ~5 | ~1 | ~0.02 |
| Pumpkin Seeds (with shell) | ~85 | ~4 | ~2 | ~0.02 |
| Sunflower Seeds (hulled) | ~100-105 | ~4 | ~2 | ~0.02 |

Note: Nutrients can vary by brand. Choose options with no or minimal sodium.