

Protein Matters

The Building Blocks of Life



Aim for at least 80 grams of protein each day!

Protein is vital for building a strong and healthy baby. Protein is the “doer” inside of us. It builds healthy cells and tissues at the most basic level. It manages important functions such as hormone production and milk production for breast feeding.

During pregnancy you need more protein *and* calories so that your body may use the protein for essential functions, rather than using it for energy. Your calorie load should meet or exceed **2,000 calories per day**.



Nauseous?

“Morning sickness” can strike at any time. This is your body’s way of letting you know that you are low on fuel. Here are some tips to get through:

- Eat small amounts of protein *through* your feelings of nausea
- Eat a protein snack right before bed to curb morning nausea
- Eat protein throughout your day
- Eat protein when you crave carbs
- Take a brewer’s yeast supplement
- Stay hydrated

Delicious. Quick. Snack.

Slice of whole grain toast
1/3 c peanut butter
Sliced banana
That’s 21 grams of protein!



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The best sources of PROTEIN

Animal Products

Animal protein is the most complete source that does not have to be supplemented. Here are some suggestions:

- Eggs
- Beef
- Lamb
- Chicken
- Fish/Shellfish
- Cheese
- Whole fat milk
- Whole fat yogurt
- Any vegetarian options listed below

Tip: Make your protein work for you! Eat foods rich in vitamin C and foods rich in dietary fats at the same time that you eat your protein foods.



Vegetarian/Vegan Options:

Always combine grains with beans, seeds or legumes for a more complete protein.

- Peanut butter or any nut butter
- Seeds
- Beans/Legumes
- Grains (wheat, rice, corn, millet, oats, etc)
- Soy/Tofu
- Dairy/Eggs (if ovo/lacto vegetarian)
- Greens
- Vegans: Supplement with B complex, which is only found in animal products.



Plan to breastfeed?

Nursing mothers need protein in order to produce the right amount of nutritious milk for their babies.

Protein sources provide your body with loads of vital minerals, vitamins and amino acids that you and your baby need all in one convenient “package”. Some amino acids we can ONLY get from the foods we eat, so be sure to eat your protein daily.

References:

- Fallon, S. (2001). *Nourishing traditions*. Washington, D.C.: New Trends Publishing
- Frye, A. (2006). *Holistic midwifery; volume 1 care during pregnancy*. Portland: Labrys Press.