

# HEALTHY PROTEIN FOODS

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Protein is an important nutrient found in every cell in our body. Protein helps our body grow, heal and repair itself. When you include protein foods with meals and snacks, it also helps control hunger.

Meats such as chicken, pork and beef; fish and seafood; dairy foods such as milk and yogurt; and eggs are good sources of protein. Plant foods like beans, lentils, soy and nuts also contain protein. Protein foods also have important vitamins and minerals like B vitamins (niacin, thiamin, riboflavin, and B6), vitamin E, iron, zinc and magnesium.

## 20-MINUTE CHICKEN CREOLE

Servings: 8

*This recipe provides an ounce of lean protein and ½ cup of vegetables. Serve over brown rice or whole grain pasta to get more protein and dietary fiber.*

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, chopped into large pieces
- 1 can diced low-sodium tomatoes (14.5 ounces with juice)
- 1 cup chili sauce
- 1 green pepper, chopped into large pieces
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves (minced)
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

1. Heat large skillet over medium-high heat (350 F). Add vegetable oil and chicken and cook until the chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165 F (3-5 minutes).
2. Reduce heat to medium (300 F) and add tomatoes with juice, chili sauce, green pepper, celery, onion, garlic, basil, parsley and cayenne pepper.
3. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered for 10-15 minutes.
4. Serve over hot, cooked whole grain rice or pasta.



Nutrition information per serving: 100 calories; 0 g saturated fat; 8 g protein; 10 g total carbohydrate; 3 g dietary fiber; 1 g added sugars; 577 mg sodium

## Choose a Variety of Lean Proteins

*Focus on eating a variety of protein foods that are low in calories and saturated fat.*

- Choose lean cuts of meat like chicken or turkey breast, 95 percent lean ground beef, beef top round roast, sirloin tip roast or steak and pork loin.
- Trim visible fat from cuts of meat.
- Remove the skin from chicken and turkey before cooking.
- Aim to eat fish and seafood twice a week.
- Buy low sodium lean deli meats like turkey, chicken breast and roast beef more often than deli meats that are higher in saturated fat like bologna and hot dogs.
- Bake, broil, roast or grill meat and seafood instead of frying to cut down on calories.
- Choose beans and peas. They are naturally low in saturated fat and a good source of fiber.
- Choose nuts and nut butters. Look for unsalted nuts to reduce sodium.

## Stretch Your Dollars

*Use the following tips to choose less expensive protein foods and get the most for your money.*

- Scan the sales flyer and use coupons to buy meats and seafood when they are on sale. Buy extra cuts of meat while they are on sale and freeze to use later.
- Get the most for your money with lean meats by adding them into mixed dishes like spaghetti or stir-fry.
- Choose dried and low-sodium canned beans. Enjoy beans as a main dish or as a replacement for some or all of the meat in recipes for soups and chili.
- Buy canned tuna and salmon to keep on hand. Look for low sodium varieties.
- Choose nut butters like peanut butter or unsalted nuts.
- Enjoy eggs with your breakfast or have “breakfast foods” for lunch or dinner.



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