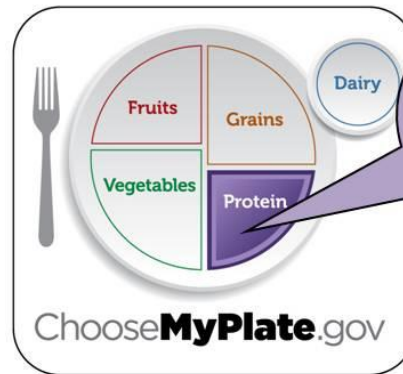


Protein will help you grow!

Protein provides important nutrients. The nutrients in this food group **help children grow!** Those nutrients help build and repair tissues, and help regulate body functions. Consuming foods in the protein group give children the nutrients to develop muscles that will **help them jump high and run fast.** The key nutrient in the protein group is protein. Protein is the nutrient used to **build and repair tissues!**



Another nutrient found in the protein group is iron, which is very important for giving the body the oxygen it **needs to move and learn.** If iron intake is low, children can become lethargic, tired, and their memory can decrease. When iron intake is low over a prolonged period of time, the result is iron deficiency anemia, where children's red blood cells become weak and don't function as well.

Foods in the protein group also contain some B-vitamins that **help children move.** While B-vitamins don't give the body energy, they do help the body to get energy from carbohydrates, proteins, and fat.

For healthy growth and development, the minimal amount of protein a child

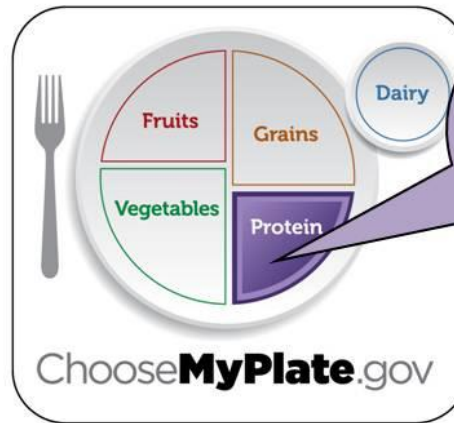
needs to consume each day is 16 grams of protein per day for a 1-3 year old and 24 grams of protein per day for a 4-6 year old. Sixteen grams is equivalent to 1 ounce servings of meat, fish, or poultry, and 1 cup of milk. Twenty-four grams of protein is equivalent to two ounces of meat, fish, or poultry, and 2 cups of fluid milk. Protein needs may increase for those children who are more physically active.

Protein helps you jump high!

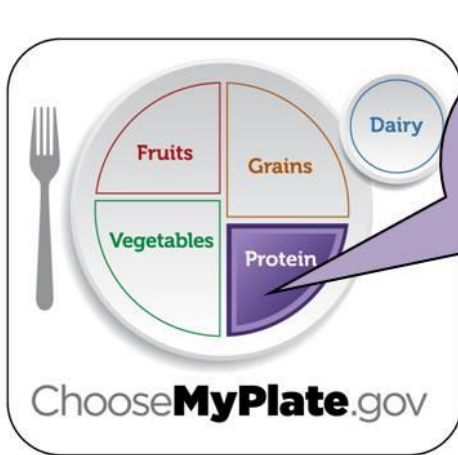
The diagram is identical to the one above, showing the MyPlate food groups with the Protein section highlighted in purple and a callout bubble pointing to it with the text "Protein helps you jump high!".

For information about how much protein is needed for you or the children in your care, visit the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/protein.html>. You can also visit the MyPlate website at http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/proteinfoods_amount.aspx.

Offering children a variety of foods in the protein group is important. Chicken, beef, pork, kidney beans, lentils, and salmon are all foods in the protein group. Giving children opportunities to try a variety of different foods from the protein group increases the likelihood they will consume the key nutrients that will **help them grow!** Visit both the CDC site <http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/protein.html> or the MyPlate website at <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/proteinfoods.html> to learn about the vast number of foods in the protein group.



Protein helps you run fast!



Protein helps you build muscle!

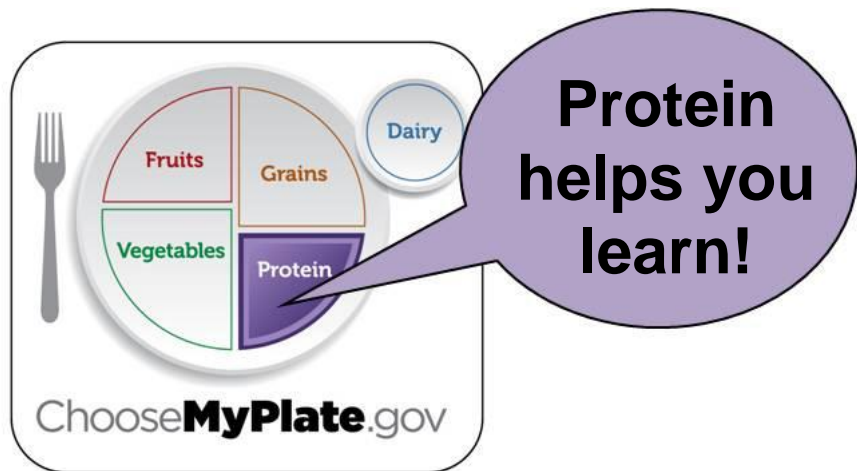
While selecting foods in the protein group, it is also critical to remember to prevent the risk of choking. Many foods in this group, such as nuts, seeds, and large pieces of meat and beans, can be potential choking hazards. Nuts and seeds are difficult to modify to prevent choking and thus should be avoided. Caregivers can take steps

to prevent the risk of children choking on meat and beans but cutting them into small pieces that are no larger than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch cube for infants and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch cube for toddlers up to age 4.

For additional information about foods in the protein group visit the MyPlate website http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/proteinfoods_tips.html. There, you will find information on choosing leaner options of meat to better support children's health, following proper handling of meats to avoid food borne illness, and information to look for on the food labels of foods in the protein group.

Some people choose to avoid meat and meat products. They are called vegetarians. Many variations of vegetarian diets are available. Some vegetarians consume eggs and milk, and are called lactoovo vegetarians. Those who do not consume any meat products, including eggs, milk, and fish are called vegans. Vegetarians, still

can choose foods in the protein group, such as tofu or tempeh products, and a variety of beans and lentils. To learn more about vegetarian diets and foods from the meat and beans group that is vegetarian visit the following link to the MyPlate website <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/vegetarian.html>. When you offer foods from the protein group to children you are offering foods that will:



Help you grow!
Help you jump high and run fast!
Help you build muscles!
Help you move!
Help you learn!

CDC link to:

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/vegetarian.html>

What is protein?
What are types of protein?
Question and Answer
How much protein do I need?
What if I am a vegetarian?

MyPlate links to:

http://www.choosemyplate.gov/foodgroups/proteinfoods_tips.html

Help your child learn to eat and enjoy a variety of foods from this food group.

Tips to help everyone make wise choices in the protein group:

Go with lean protein:

Vary your protein choices:

What to look for on the food label:

Keep it safe to eat:

Vegetarian choices in the protein group:

What counts as an ounce in the protein group?

What foods are in the protein group?

Learn how to prepare meats and beans to avoid a choking hazard.