

High-Calorie, High-Protein Recipes

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Introduction

Eating high-calorie, high-protein foods is an easy way to improve your nutrition without eating large amounts.

- For an extra boost, add 1 tablespoon powdered milk to any recipe. This provides an extra 33 calories and 3 grams of protein.
- Recipes with an asterisk (*) can be made lactose-free.
- Calories and protein are based on the use of whole milk when other options are listed (soy milk, rice milk, Ensure, Boost).
- All recipes can be modified to reflect your own preferences and tastes.

Shakes, smoothies and other drinks

For all shakes and smoothies, simply mix the ingredients in a blender. Chill before serving, if you wish. Keep leftovers in the refrigerator (no more than 2 days) or freezer.

- You may also put smoothies into a bowl and add toppings to further increase calories and protein. Examples of toppings include: unsweetened fruit, dried coconut, slivered almonds, finely chopped walnuts and pistachios.

High-Protein Milk

- 1 quart whole milk
- 1 cup powdered milk

Drink it alone, use it in cooking or add it to other drinks. Try this recipe mixed into pudding, potatoes, soup, ground meat, cooked cereal, milk shakes, yogurt and pancake batter.

1 cup contains about 211 calories and 14 grams of protein.

Apple Pie à la Mode*

- 1 cup apple pie filling
- ½ cup whole milk, soy milk or rice milk
- 1 cup vanilla ice cream or non-dairy ice cream
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon

Contains about 550 calories and 10 grams of protein.

Banana Apple Shake

- 1 banana
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- ½ cup unsweetened applesauce
- ½ cup whole milk, soy milk, rice milk or vanilla-flavored nutrition drink (such as Boost or Ensure)
- 1 tablespoon honey

Contains about 400 calories and 9 grams of protein.

Banana Oatie*

- ½ cup cooked oatmeal, chilled
- 1 banana, frozen
- 1 cup whole milk, soy milk, rice milk or nutrition drink (such as Boost or Ensure, any flavor)
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Contains about 330 calories and 8 grams of protein.

Chocolate, Banana and Peanut Butter Smoothie*

- 1 cup plain yogurt, whole milk, half-and-half, unflavored soy milk or rice milk
- 1 tablespoon creamy peanut butter
- 2 tablespoons chocolate syrup
- 1 frozen banana (or 1 banana at room temperature + 3 ice cubes)

Contains about 550 calories and 14 grams of protein.

Chocolate Milk Shake

- ¼ cup chocolate syrup
- ½ cup powdered milk
- 1½ cups ice cream
- ½ cup high-protein milk (see recipe on this page)

Contains about 460 calories and 25 grams of protein.

Cocoa Almond Shake

- 1 cup chocolate ice cream
- ⅔ cup whole milk
- 1 tablespoon almond butter
- ¼ cup coconut milk
- 2 teaspoons coconut extract (optional)

Contains about 590 calories and 14 grams of protein.

Lemon Smoothie

- 6 ounces lemon yogurt (made with whole milk)
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 medium ripe banana
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Contains about 415 calories and 16 grams of protein.

Orange Shake

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup vanilla yogurt
- 2 tablespoons powdered milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup orange juice

Contains about 300 calories and 12 grams of protein.

Peach Frost

- 1 envelope vanilla instant breakfast mix
- 1 cup whole milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup peach yogurt
- 6 to 10 crushed ice cubes

Contains about 400 calories and 17 grams of protein.

Peach Shake*

- 1 can (8 ounces) vanilla-flavored nutrition drink (such as Boost or Ensure)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon vanilla
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canned peaches, packed in heavy syrup

Contains about 340 calories and 8 grams of protein.

Sherbet Shake

- 1 cup sherbet
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole milk, rice milk, vanilla-flavored soy milk or vanilla-flavored nutrition drink (such as Boost or Ensure)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla extract

Contains about 300 calories and 4 grams of protein.

Strawberry Almond Shake*

- 1 can (8 ounces) strawberry-flavored nutrition drink (such as Boost or Ensure)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup tofu
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup frozen strawberries
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon almond extract

Contains about 540 calories and 28 grams of protein.

Vanilla Instant Breakfast Shake

- 1 envelope vanilla instant breakfast mix
- 1 cup whole milk or half-and-half
- 1 cup vanilla ice cream

Try this recipe with another flavor of ice cream or instant breakfast mix.

Contains about 560 calories and 19 grams of protein.

Side dishes

Fortified Macaroni and Cheese

- 1 package (7.25 ounces) macaroni and cheese dinner
- Butter or margarine
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons skim milk powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup shredded cheddar cheese

Boil macaroni, using the directions on the package. Add the butter and powdered cheese mix, but **don't add the milk**. Instead, stir in the whipping cream and skim milk powder. Reduce heat and mix well. Stir in the cheddar cheese, and mix until well melted.

1 cup contains about 563 calories and 16 grams of protein.

Hearty Mashed Potatoes

- 2/3 cup water
- 2/3 cup heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 2/3 cup potato flakes
- 3 tablespoons sour cream
- Salt and pepper

Combine water, cream and butter in bowl. Microwave on high for 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the potato flakes. Add sour cream and mix well. Add salt and pepper to taste. (For extra protein and calories, add cheese, gravy or extra sour cream.)

1/2 cup contains about 495 calories and 4 grams of protein.

Super Sweet Potato Mash

- 1 small sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 1/2 cups apricot nectar
- 4 ounces soft or silken tofu
- 2 tablespoons honey

Boil or steam sweet potato pieces until soft, about 10 to 15 minutes. Drain and place in a blender. Add apricot nectar, tofu and honey. Blend until smooth. Serve warm.

Contains about 500 calories and 9 grams of protein.

Snacks and desserts

Frosty Hot Cocoa

- 1/2 cup ice cubes
- 1 packet hot chocolate mix
- 1/2 cup chocolate whole milk, soy milk or chocolate-flavored nutrition drink (such as Boost or Ensure)

Blend ice cubes until the ice looks like the ice in a snow cone. Add hot chocolate mix. Then add milk. Mix well and serve.

Contains about 230 calories and 10 grams protein.

High-Protein Gelatin*

- 3-ounce package of gelatin (any flavor)
- 1/3 cup dried egg whites (such as Just Whites, found with other baking products in the grocery store)

Note: **Don't** use liquid egg whites in this recipe.

Follow the directions on the package for making gelatin. Add dried egg whites to the warm gelatin mixture. Whisk gently for 2 minutes until dissolved.

Chill mixture in the refrigerator until it's set.

1/2 cup contains about 110 calories and 9 grams of protein.

Instant Vanilla Pudding

- 1 can (8 ounces) vanilla-flavored Boost Plus or Ensure Plus, chilled
- 1 packet (4.5 ounces) vanilla instant pudding mix

Mix until smooth. Chill in refrigerator for about 1 hour.

Contains about 360 calories and 7 grams of protein.

Peanut Butter Spread

- 1 tablespoon non-fat dry milk
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 5 tablespoons peanut butter (smooth)

Stir together milk, water and vanilla. When moist, add the honey and peanut butter. Stir slowly until blended. Spread on crackers or form into balls to chill and eat like candy. Store in the refrigerator.

3 tablespoons contain about 279 calories and 11 grams of protein.

Trail Mix

- ¾ cup cashews
- 1 cup walnuts or pecans
- ½ cup raisins
- ½ cup dried cranberries (or other dried fruit)
- ¾ cup shredded coconut
- ¾ cup chocolate chips or M&M's

Mix well. Store in an air-tight container.

Note: **Don't** give to children under age 3.

½ cup contains about 350 calories and 7 grams of protein.

Breakfast foods

Baked Bananas

- 2 firm bananas, cut up
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon (or to taste)

Place bananas in a baking dish. Top with butter, sugar and cinnamon. Bake in the oven at 350°F for 25 to 30 minutes.

Contains about 510 calories and 3 grams of protein.

Blueberry Muffins

- ½ cup whole milk, half-and-half or vanilla-flavored nutrition drink (such as Boost or Ensure)
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 package (6.5 ounces) blueberry muffin mix
- 6 large muffin tins, greased

Pre-heat oven to 375° F. Mix the milk, egg and oil.

Pour the muffin mix into a separate bowl. Stir the liquid mixture into the muffin mix (batter will be lumpy). Pour into muffin tins and bake until golden brown, about 15 to 20 minutes.

One muffin contains about 166 calories and 3 grams of protein.

Vegetable Frittata

- 1 tablespoon canola or olive oil
- ½ cup diced red pepper
- ¼ cup diced yellow onion
- ½ cup canned black beans, drained and rinsed
- 6 large eggs
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- ¼ cup grated reduced-fat sharp cheddar cheese or cheese of your choice
- ¼ avocado, thinly sliced
- ½ cup chunky salsa or pico de gallo
- 2 tablespoons chopped cilantro for garnish (optional)

In large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat.

Add red pepper, onion, jalapeño and black beans and sauté 5 minutes, being careful not to mash beans. With wooden spoon, stir vegetables and beans until evenly distributed.

Beat eggs in bowl and pour eggs over top of vegetables. Spread with spoon to evenly distribute across vegetables and beans. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cover and cook over medium heat until eggs are just set, about 2 to 3 minutes.

Remove pan from heat and sprinkle with cheese. Cover and allow cheese to melt for just a minute. Gently slide the frittata onto plate or platter.

Top with avocado slices and salsa. If desired, garnish with fresh cilantro.

Makes 4 servings.

One serving contains about 200 calories, 13 grams of total fat (3 grams of saturated fat), 9 grams of carbohydrate and 13 grams of protein.

Oatmeal*

- ½ cup whole milk, half-and-half or vanilla-flavored nutrition drink (such as Boost or Ensure)
- 1 packet instant oatmeal
- Cinnamon to taste

Mix milk and oatmeal. Microwave uncovered for up to 2 minutes, or until thick. Add cinnamon and serve.

Contains about 220 calories and 13 grams protein.

Pancakes

- ½ cup whole milk, half-and-half or vanilla-flavored nutrition drink (such as Boost or Ensure)
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil, plus extra for the griddle
- ½ cup pancake mix

Mix the milk, egg and oil. Pour the pancake mix into a large bowl Gently stir the liquid mixture into the pancake mix. Let the batter rest for 2 minutes.

Drop the batter by ¼ cups onto a lightly greased griddle. Flip when the edges are set and the top is covered with bubbles.

Three pancakes contain about 220 calories and 5 grams of protein.

Soups

Turkey Minestrone Soup

- 1 pound ground turkey breast or lean ground beef
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 8 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth or beef broth
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) diced tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ cup small pasta, such as orzo or pastini

- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach
- 1 can (15 ounces) chickpeas or white beans, rinsed and drained
- Pepper and salt to taste
- Grated parmesan cheese (optional)

In a stock pot over medium-high heat, sauté the turkey and onion until the turkey is cooked through. Add the carrots and celery and sauté for 10 minutes, or until softened. Add the broth, tomatoes, basil and oregano and stir to combine. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring every so often.

Add the pasta, frozen spinach and chickpeas or beans and cook for 10 minutes, or until pasta is tender, stirring every so often. Season with salt and pepper. Serve with parmesan cheese.

Makes 14 servings.

One serving contains about 120 calories, 1 gram of fat and 13 grams of protein.

White Bean and Chicken Soup

- 1 rotisserie chicken breast section or 3 cups chopped/shredded white chicken meat
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 3 carrots, sliced
- 2 celery stalks, sliced
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cups water
- 6 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 can (15 ounces) great northern beans, rinsed and drained
- Pepper and salt to taste

Remove skin from breast and discard. Shred the meat from the breast and break off breast bones.

Heat oil in a stock pot over medium heat. Sauté the carrots, celery and onion for 8 to 10 minutes, or until vegetables soften.

Add water and chicken broth and bring to a boil, stirring to combine. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes. Add beans and chicken meat and cook for 5 minutes. If too thick, add more broth or water. Season with salt and pepper.

Makes 6 servings.

One serving contains about 235 calories, 5 grams of fat and 28 grams of protein.

Main dishes

Apple Turkey Wrap

- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise of your choice
- 2 teaspoons honey mustard
- 2 whole-wheat wraps or flour tortillas (8-inch)
- 2 cups baby spinach, washed and dried
- 4 thin slices turkey breast (4 ounces)
- ¼ Granny Smith apple, sliced paper thin
- 2 thin slices of avocado (optional)

Combine mayonnaise and mustard. Spread mixture to edges of the wraps.

Arrange spinach, turkey, apple slices and avocado (optional) on one half of the wrap. Fold over the end of the wrap without the fillings on, then fold the 2 sides in and roll the wrap as tight as possible. Enjoy now, or cover and chill to save for later.

One serving contains about 260 calories, 6 grams total fat (1 gram saturated) and 22 grams of protein.

Chicken and Quinoa Burritos*

What is quinoa? It's a grain that's similar to rice but has more protein and slightly more calories. It can be used as a rice substitute in many dishes.

- 4 burrito-size whole-wheat tortillas, warmed
- 1 cup shredded rotisserie chicken, warmed
- 1 cup black beans, rinsed and warmed
- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- 1 cup shredded cheese of your choice

- 1 cup fresh cilantro (optional)
- ½ cup plain greek yogurt
- 1 avocado, sliced (optional)
- 1 cup salsa

Divide ingredients evenly between the 4 tortillas. Arrange ingredients on one half of the tortilla. Fold over the end of the wrap without the fillings on, then fold the 2 sides in and roll the wrap as tight as possible. Enjoy, or cover and chill to save for later.

One serving contains about 657 calories, 24 grams total fat (9 gram saturated) and 38 grams of protein. Not using avocado or using less cheese will lower the calories and fat content.

Chickpea and Avocado Wraps

- 1 ripe avocado
- 1 can (15.5 ounces) of reduced sodium garbanzo beans (chickpeas)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons cilantro, finely chopped (optional)
- 2 tablespoons red onion, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 celery stalk, finely chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 4 Boston lettuce leaves or 4 medium tortillas or 4 slices whole wheat bread
- 1 medium tomato, sliced
- 2 tablespoons feta cheese

Drain beans and add to a medium-sized mixing bowl. Mash until they're as smooth as you like them. Add the avocado and lemon juice and continue mashing until well mixed. Stir in cilantro (optional), red onion, celery, cumin, salt and pepper.

Spoon mixture onto lettuce cups/tortilla/bread. Top with sliced tomatoes, feta cheese and any other toppings you like (such as cucumbers, bell pepper, jalapenos or sprouts).

One serving contains about 200 calories, 10 grams total fat (2 gram saturated) and 8 grams of protein.

Lasagna with Roasted Vegetables

2 eggs
½ cup grated parmesan cheese
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
½ teaspoon garlic powder
4 cups low-sodium tomato sauce
3 cups low-fat mozzarella cheese
2 eggplants (about 3 pounds total)
6 medium zucchini (about 3 pounds total)
Canola oil cooking spray
1 pound whole-wheat lasagna noodles
15 ounces low-fat ricotta or low-fat cottage cheese
(or a combination of both)

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Grease a 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking pan and then set aside.

Slice the eggplant and zucchini into ½-inch slices. Coat both sides of the vegetable slices with cooking spray and place on 2 baking sheets. Roast the slices for 20 minutes. Toss or flip the vegetables and continue to roast until well browned and soft, about 20 minutes more. Transfer vegetables to a large bowl.

Reduce the oven temperature to 375 degrees.

Cook the lasagna noodles according to package directions. Separate the noodles and let them cool slightly.

While the noodles are cooling, mix together the ricotta and/or cottage cheeses, eggs, parmesan, nutmeg and garlic powder in a medium bowl.

To assemble the lasagna, spread a thin layer of sauce over the bottom of the prepared pan. Cover with a layer of pasta (noodle strips slightly overlapping). Spread with one-third of the ricotta mixture. Sprinkle one-quarter of the mozzarella over the ricotta. Spoon one-third of the roasted vegetables on top. Top with ½ cup of tomato sauce, and continue the assembly as directed until you have 4 layers of pasta and 3 layers

of filling. Spread the remaining sauce on top and sprinkle with the remaining mozzarella cheese.

Cover the pan with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and continue to bake until golden and bubbly, about 15 minutes more. Let stand for 15 minutes before serving.

Makes 12 servings.

One serving contains about 360 calories, 11 grams of total fat (5 grams saturated fat), 45 grams of carbohydrate, 23 grams of protein, 11 grams of dietary fiber and 310 milligrams (mg) sodium.

Recipes adapted from:

American Cancer Society. *Nutrition for the Person with Cancer: A Guide for Patients and Families*. Atlanta: American Cancer Society, 2016: 16–17.

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National Cancer Institute. *Eating Hints: Before, During and After Cancer Treatment*. January 2018 At: www.cancer.gov/publications/patient-education/eatinghints.pdf. Accessed April 19, 2022.

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