



Trinity College Dublin
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Strategies for Successful Ageing



10 tips for adding extra protein to your diet

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Protein is the building block from which muscle is made and is essential for both growth and repair. To stay fit and strong eat a variety of protein-rich foods each day. Great sources include lean meat, poultry and fish. Oily fish like salmon, sardines and kippers are packed with protein and heart-healthy omega-3 fats, and should be eaten twice a week. Milk, yoghurt and cheese are also excellent sources of protein and are rich in calcium too. Eating beans, eggs and nuts is a simple way of boosting protein in your diet.

Here are some simple ideas for boosting the protein content of some everyday meals and snacks:

1. Add hard-boiled eggs to salads.
2. Add tinned tuna or tinned salmon to salads or pasta dishes.
3. Eat Greek or low-calorie unsweetened yoghurt alone as a snack or add to fruit and cereal, at breakfast.
4. Add milk or yoghurt to a fruit smoothie.
5. Add nut butter to sandwiches, toast, crackers, or muffins, or use as a dip for vegetables and fruit.
6. Add skimmed milk powder to cream soups, mashed potatoes, casseroles, puddings, and milk-based desserts.
7. Add skimmed milk powder to regular milk for use in drinks, hot porridge, breakfast cereals, custard and milk puddings.
8. Add nuts, seeds, or wheat germ to casseroles, breads, muffins and pancakes, or use nuts, seeds, or wheat germ to top fruit, cereal, ice cream, and yogurt or in place of breadcrumbs.
9. Add high quality vegetable protein sources like soy, quinoa and pulses (e.g., chickpeas, kidney beans, butter beans and lentils) to soups, casseroles, or salads.
10. Add cheese to sauces, vegetables, salads, mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs and omelettes and casseroles.

For more information about the current healthy eating guidelines for older people in Ireland, and the number of recommended portions and size see:

- The Food Safety Authority of Ireland's booklet, "Healthy Eating and Active Living for Adults, Teenagers and Children over 5 Years". You can download this booklet using this [link](#).
- The Irish Department of Health booklet "Your guide to Healthy Eating Using the Food Pyramid". An older version is available [here](#), but it is currently under review and due for re-release in 2016.

Warning: Increasing protein intake is not advisable for people with renal dysfunction, kidney disease and those taking certain medical conditions. Always consult your General Practitioner before altering your diet. These tips are based on Irish national healthy eating guidelines and are aimed at healthy individuals engaging in strength training programmes.

Sources:

- FSAI (2012) Healthy Eating and Active living for Adults, Teenagers and Children over 5 Years. www.fsai.ie. Download this PDF using this [link](#).
- FSAI (2011) Scientific Recommendations for Healthy Eating Guidelines in Ireland www.fsai.ie. Download this PDF using this [link](#).
- British Dietetic Association (2015) Food Fact Sheet – Malnutrition www.bda.uk.com. Download this PDF using this [link](#).