



Arnprior and District Family Health Team
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Healthy Eating on a Budget: Protein



Keeping our families healthy is a priority for everyone right now. While food alone can't prevent all illness - a balanced diet helps keep your body's disease-fighting mechanisms in top shape! Proteins are the building blocks of our immune system and it's important to ensure we continue to eat appropriate amounts. Use more of these ideas to find ways to squeeze more protein into your grocery budget, and to help ensure you and your family stay as healthy as possible.

1. Canned Fish

Fish is a densely packed source of nutrition and the canned version is a steal! Not only are these foods a great source of protein, but many - like salmon - also provide a good dose of healthy omega-3 fats. Try making salmon burgers, adding canned tuna or clams to pasta or having herring on crackers.

2. Legumes

Legumes - beans, lentils and chickpeas - are excellent, inexpensive protein sources! Get them canned, or for an even more budget-friendly option, dried! As a bonus you'll also get a ton of heart-healthy fibre. Not sure how to use legumes in your cooking? The possibilities are endless! Check out Pulse Canada for some [downloadable recipe resources](#).

3. Eggs

For years egg whites have been called “the perfect protein” and with good reason! These little guys contain all the essential “amino acid” building blocks we need to keep our bodies running in peak form! Eggs are extremely versatile too - don’t just relegate them to your breakfast plate! For more meal inspiration and ideas visit <https://www.eggs.ca/>.

4. Tofu

Don’t fear the tofu - I promise it’s not as scary as you imagine! Tofu is like a flavour sponge and will readily soak up whatever you season it with to produce shockingly delicious (and nutritious!) results. Try adding silken tofu to a smoothie, making tofu tacos or marinate it for a quick but flavourful stirfry!

5. Be your own butcher!

Avoid paying premiums by buying less “butchered” cuts of meat. Skip the skinless, boneless chicken breasts and grab chicken pieces with the skin and bone still attached. Even better - get a whole chicken! You can always debone and deskin yourself and as an added bonus, you can use the bones to make a simple broth for soup!

6. Tenderize and Season

When buying beef and pork, stick to cuts like inside round, stew beef, or pork shoulder. These more budget-friendly cuts are sometimes less tender or flavourful but can quickly be transformed by either marinating overnight, pounding with a mallet or cooking slowly in a flavourful liquid like broth or tomato juice.