

What foods are in the meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, and nuts (meat & beans) group?



All foods made from meat, poultry, fish, dry beans or peas, eggs, nuts, and seeds are considered part of this group. Dry beans and peas are part of this group as well as the vegetable group. Most meat and poultry choices should be lean or low-fat. Fish, nuts, and seeds contain healthy oils, so choose these foods frequently instead of meat or poultry. Some commonly eaten choices in the Meat and Beans group, with selection tips, are:

Meats*

Lean cuts of:

beef
ham
lamb
pork
veal

Game meats:

bison
rabbit
venison

Lean ground meats:

beef
pork
lamb

Lean luncheon meats

Organ meats:

liver
giblets

Poultry*

chicken
duck
goose
turkey
ground chicken and turkey

Eggs*

chicken eggs
duck eggs

Dry beans and peas:

black beans
black-eyed peas
chickpeas (garbanzo beans)
falafel
kidney beans
lentils
lima beans (mature)
navy beans
pinto beans
soy beans
split peas
tofu (bean curd made from soy beans)
white beans

bean burgers:

garden burgers
veggie burgers

tempeh

texturized vegetable protein (TVP)

Nuts & seeds*

almonds
cashews
hazelnuts (filberts)
mixed nuts
peanuts
peanut butter
pecans
pistachios
pumpkin seeds
sesame seeds
sunflower seeds
walnuts

Fish*

Finfish such as:

catfish
cod
flounder
haddock
halibut
herring
mackerel
pollock
porgy
salmon
sea bass
snapper
swordfish
trout
tuna

Shellfish such as:

clams
crab
crayfish
lobster
mussels
octopus
oysters
scallops
squid (calamari)
shrimp

Canned fish such as:

anchovies
clams
tuna
sardines

*Selection Tips

Choose lean or low-fat meat and poultry. If higher fat choices are made, such as regular ground beef (75 to 80% lean) or chicken with skin, the fat in the product counts as part of the discretionary calorie allowance.

If solid fat is added in cooking, such as frying chicken in shortening or frying eggs in butter or stick margarine, this also counts as part of the discretionary calorie allowance.

Select fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, trout, and herring, more often.

Liver and other organ meats are high in cholesterol. Egg yolks are also high in cholesterol, but egg whites are cholesterol-free.

Processed meats such as ham, sausage, frankfurters, and luncheon or deli meats have added sodium. Check the ingredient and Nutrition Facts label to help limit sodium intake. Fresh chicken, turkey,

and pork that have been enhanced with a salt-containing solution also have added sodium. Check the product label for statements such as "self-basting" or "contains up to ___% of ___", which mean that a sodium-containing solution has been added to the product.

Sunflower seeds, almonds, and hazelnuts (filberts) are the richest sources of vitamin E in this food group. To help meet vitamin E recommendations, make these your nut and seed choices more often.

How much food from the meat & beans group is needed daily?

The amount of food from the Meat and Beans Group you need to eat depends on age, sex and level of physical activity. Most Americans eat enough food from this group, but need to make leaner and more varied selections of these foods. Recommended daily amounts are shown in the chart.

Children	2-3 years old	2 ounce equivalents**
	4-8 years old	3 - 4 ounce equivalents**
Girls	9-13 years old	5 ounce equivalents**
	14-18 years old	5 ounce equivalents**
Boys	9-13 years old	5 ounce equivalents**
	14-18 years old	6 ounce equivalents**
Women	19-30 years old	5½ ounce equivalents**
	31-50 years old	5 ounce equivalents**
	51+ years old	5 ounce equivalents**
Men	19-30 years old	6½ ounce equivalents**
	31-50 years old	6 ounce equivalents**
	51+ years old	5½ ounce equivalents**

*These amounts are appropriate for individuals who get less than 30 minutes per day of moderate physical activity, beyond normal daily activities. Those who are more physically active may be able to consume more while staying within calorie needs.

What counts as an ounce equivalent in the meat & beans group?

In general, 1 ounce of meat, poultry or fish, ¼ cup cooked dry beans, 1 egg, 1 tablespoon of peanut butter, or ½ ounce of nuts or seeds can be considered as 1 ounce equivalent from the meat and beans group. The chart lists specific amounts that count as 1 ounce equivalent in the Meat and Beans group towards your daily recommended intake:

	Amount that counts as 1 ounce equivalent in the Meat and Beans group	Common portions and ounce equivalents
Meats	1 ounce cooked lean beef	1 small steak (eye of round, filet) = 3½ to 4 ounce equivalents
	1 ounce cooked lean pork or ham	1 small lean hamburger = 2 to 3 ounce equivalents
Poultry	1 ounce cooked chicken or turkey, without skin	1 small chicken breast half = 3 ounce equivalents
	1 sandwich slice of turkey (4½ x 2½ x ⅛")	½ Cornish game hen = 4 ounce equivalents
Fish	1 ounce cooked fish or shell fish	1 can of tuna, drained = 3 to 4 ounce equivalents
		1 salmon steak = 4 to 6 ounce equivalents
		1 small trout = 3 ounce equivalents
Eggs	1 egg	

Nuts and seeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ½ ounce of nuts (12 almonds, 24 pistachios, 7 walnut halves) ½ ounce of seeds (pumpkin, sunflower or squash seeds, hulled, roasted) 1 Tablespoon of peanut butter or almond butter 	1 ounce of nuts or seeds = 2 oz eq
Dry beans and peas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¼ cup of cooked dry beans (such as black, kidney, pinto, or white beans) ¼ cup of cooked dry peas (such as chickpeas, cowpeas, lentils, or split peas) ¼ cup of baked beans, refried beans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 cup split pea soup = 2 oz eq 1 cup lentil soup = 2 oz eq 1 cup bean soup = 2 oz eq
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¼ cup (about 2 ounces) of tofu 1 oz. tempeh, cooked ¼ cup roasted soybeans 1 falafel patty (2 ¼", 4 oz) 2 Tbsp. hummus 	1 soy or bean burger patty = 2 oz eq

Tips to help you make wise choices from the meat & beans group

Go lean with protein:

- Start with a lean choice:
 - The leanest beef cuts include round steaks and roasts (round eye, top round, bottom round, round tip), top loin, top sirloin, and chuck shoulder and arm roasts.
 - The leanest pork choices include pork loin, tenderloin, center loin, and ham.
 - Choose extra lean ground beef. The label should say at least "90% lean". You may be able to find ground beef that is 93% or 95% lean.
 - Buy skinless chicken parts, or take off the skin before cooking.
 - Boneless skinless chicken breasts and turkey cutlets are the leanest poultry choices.
 - Choose lean turkey, roast beef, ham, or low-fat luncheon meats for sandwiches instead of luncheon meats with more fat, such as regular bologna or salami.
- Keep it lean:
 - Trim away all of the visible fat from meats and poultry before cooking.
 - Broil, grill, roast, poach, or boil meat, poultry, or fish instead of frying.
 - Drain off any fat that appears during cooking.
 - Skip or limit the breading on meat, poultry, or fish. Breading adds fat and calories. It will also cause the food to soak up more fat during frying.
 - Prepare dry beans and peas without added fats.
 - Choose and prepare foods without high fat sauces or gravies.



Vary your protein choices:

- Choose fish more often for lunch or dinner. Look for fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, trout, and herring. Some ideas are:
 - Salmon steak or filet
 - Salmon loaf
 - Grilled or baked trout
- Choose dry beans or peas as a main dish or part of a meal often. Some choices are:
 - Chili with kidney or pinto beans
 - Stir-fried tofu
 - Split pea, lentil, minestrone, or white bean soups
 - Baked beans
 - Black bean enchiladas
 - Garbanzo or kidney beans on a chef's salad
 - Rice and beans



- Veggie burgers or garden burgers
- Hummus (chickpeas) spread on pita bread
- Choose nuts as a snack, on salads, or in main dishes. Use nuts to replace meat or poultry, not in addition to these items:
 - Use pine nuts in pesto sauce for pasta.
 - Add slivered almonds to steamed vegetables.
 - Add toasted peanuts or cashews to a vegetable stir fry instead of meat.
 - Sprinkle a few nuts on top of low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt.
 - Add walnuts or pecans to a green salad instead of cheese or meat.



What to look for on the Food Label:

- Check the Nutrition Facts label for the saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol, and sodium content of packaged foods.
 - Processed meats such as hams, sausages, frankfurters, and luncheon or deli meats have added sodium. Check the ingredient and Nutrition Facts label to help limit sodium intake.
 - Fresh chicken, turkey, and pork that have been enhanced with a salt-containing solution also have added sodium. Check the product label for statements such as “self-basting” or “contains up to ___% of ___.”
 - Lower fat versions of many processed meats are available. Look on the Nutrition Facts label to choose products with less fat and saturated fat.

Keep it safe to eat:

- Separate raw, cooked and ready-to-eat foods.
- Do not wash or rinse meat or poultry.
- Wash cutting boards, knives, utensils and counter tops in hot soapy water after preparing each food item and before going on to the next one.
- Store raw meat, poultry and seafood on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator so juices don’t drip onto other foods.
- Cook foods to a safe temperature to kill microorganisms. Use a meat thermometer, which measures the internal temperature of cooked meat and poultry, to make sure that the meat is cooked all the way through.
- Chill (refrigerate) perishable food promptly and defrost foods properly. Refrigerate or freeze perishables, prepared food and leftovers within two hours.
- Plan ahead to defrost foods. Never defrost food on the kitchen counter at room temperature. Thaw food by placing it in the refrigerator, submerging air-tight packaged food in cold tap water, or defrosting on a plate in the microwave.
- Avoid raw or partially cooked eggs or foods containing raw eggs and raw or undercooked meat and poultry.
- Women who may become pregnant, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and young children should avoid some types of fish and eat types lower in mercury. See www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/admehg3.html or call 1-888-SAFEFOOD for more information.