

High Protein Snack Ideas

Read the label and aim for at least 7 - 10 grams of protein per serving. If you are following a special diet, consult with your registered dietitian for a custom list of high protein snacks.

- Greek yogurt (no sugar added)
- Cheese - string cheese, cottage cheese, cubed or sliced cheese
- Peanut/nut butter with apple slices, vegetables or crackers
- Sliced, lean deli meat and/or cheese with bread or crackers
- Nuts and seeds
- Hard boiled eggs
- Hummus with veggies or crackers
- Edamame
- Kefir, milk, protein supplements
- Meat Jerky
- Grains - quinoa, beans, lentils, faro, millet
- Soup, bone broth
- Canned tuna, salmon or sardines
- Protein bar - at least 10 grams of protein and less than 10 grams of sugar
- Protein powder - choose an organic grass fed protein powder without any artificial ingredients or flavorings
- Super smoothies (see Mix-and-Match Super Smoothie Recipes) with added protein



Improving Your Nutrition Before and After Surgery

Improving your nutrition by eating the right foods for 2 - 4 weeks before surgery will help prepare your body for the upcoming stress of surgery. Your body needs nutrition from a variety of healthy foods to properly heal wounds and recover after surgery. Look for fresh, whole foods with minimal or no processing to fuel your body.

Water

Water makes up the largest part of your body. About 60 percent of your body weight is water. Your body uses water in all its cells, organs and tissues to help regulate your temperature and maintain other bodily functions. In digestion, it aids in getting rid of toxins and waste. Drink a minimum of 64 ounces of water or fluid daily unless your doctor has advised otherwise.

Protein

Protein is in every cell of your body and plays an important role in wound healing. Eating more protein before surgery can help improve your recovery after surgery as your protein needs can double after surgery. Include protein with each meal. Protein is found in a variety of foods including fish, poultry, meat, eggs, dairy, Greek yogurt, cheese, beans, nuts (almonds, walnuts, nut butters) and seeds. If you are a vegetarian, you can meet your protein needs by eating plenty of vegetables, tofu, legumes, nuts, seeds and nut butters. For other ideas on how to improve your protein intake, see "Mix-and-Match Super Smoothie Recipes" and "High Protein Snack Ideas" on the following pages. If you prefer a nutrition bar, choose one that provides at least 10 grams of protein and less than 10 grams of sugar per bar. These can be found in most stores.

Calories

To meet your high calorie needs after surgery, eat many small meals throughout the day. Choose foods packed with nutrients to help improve your intake.

Antioxidants

Antioxidants boost your immune system and are obtained through the vitamins and minerals in the food that you eat. Antioxidants remove harmful toxins from your body. Most fruits and vegetables are rich in antioxidants and can be identified by their bright red, yellow or orange colors. Foods such as spinach, tomatoes, carrots, red grapes, berries, apples, cranberries, walnuts and broccoli are rich in antioxidants. Refer to the handout "Dietitians Top 15 Super Foods."

Foods To Avoid

All foods are not created equal. Before surgery, avoid foods that increase inflammation in your body. Those foods include sugar and white flour; saturated fats from high fat meats and organ meats; trans fats from commercially baked goods; and alcohol. Limit processed foods and foods from a box. Focus on fresh foods, including fresh fruits, vegetables and nuts.

Mix-and-Match Super Smoothies

Super smoothies improve your health and well-being by providing essential vitamins, nutrients, minerals and antioxidants. The steps below provide ideas for making healthy, super smoothies with a blender. Start by selecting one or two items from each ingredient group, and mix-and-match as you like. You will find combinations that work well for you. Keep in mind, all steps are not necessary. Enjoy right after making, or freeze to drink later. A serving size is 1-2 cups.

Step 1: Start with Ice

Thin smoothie: use 1-4 cubes

Thicker smoothie: use 5-10 cubes

Step 2: Select a Protein

- Whey protein
- Rice protein
- Pea protein
- Other proteins or protein blends
- Greek yogurt
- Tofu

Find a protein supplement that you digest well and enjoy. Use 1-2 scoops (25-50 grams). If using Greek yogurt or tofu, use 1-2 cups (20-48 grams).

Step 3: Select a Fruit

- Apple (remove the core)
- Banana
- Berries
- Cherries
- Dates
- Kiwi
- Melon
- Pineapple
- Mango

Use fresh or frozen fruit of your choosing, 1-2 handfuls. Bananas provide great consistency, especially if frozen; a half of a banana is usually enough.



Step 4: Select a Veggie

- Beets/Beet greens
- Cucumber/Celery
- Dark, leafy greens such as Kale/Swiss chard/Spinach
- Pumpkin/Sweet potato

Spinach is virtually flavorless, but adds a lot of nutrition. Canned pumpkin pairs well with vanilla. When using beets (1-2 handfuls), try roasting and removing the skin first. Beets pair well with chocolate.

Step 5: Select a Nut/Seed

- Almonds
- Cashews
- Flax, Hemp, Chia seeds
- Peanut/Nut butter
- Walnuts

Nuts and seeds (one handful) give the smoothie a great consistency and added protein.

Step 6: Select a Liquid

- Water
- Almond milk (unsweetened)
- Soy milk (unsweetened)
- Coconut water
- Iced green tea
- Hemp milk (unsweetened)
- Orange juice

Add liquid at the end of the process to improve how the smoothie blends and to control consistency.

Step 7: Select a Topper

- Cinnamon
- Coconut
- Dark chocolate/Cocoa powder
- Granola, Oats
- Pomegranate seeds/Goji berries
- Sunflower seeds

Super Smoothie Recipes

Very Berry Smoothie

Makes 2 servings

- 2-5 ice cubes
- 2 scoops of plain pea protein powder
- 1 cup frozen mixed berries
- 1 cup spinach
- 1 tbsp. walnuts, 1 tbsp. ground flaxseed
- Water (just enough to mix)

Blend and drink

250 calories, 29 grams protein per serving

Strawberry Banana Smoothie

Makes 2 servings

- Ice cubes
- 2 scoops protein powder
- 1 frozen banana
- 1 cup frozen/fresh strawberries
- 1 cup spinach
- 2 tbsp. chia seeds
- 1 cup coconut water

Blend and drink

245 calories, 28 grams protein per serving

Apple and Oats Smoothie

Makes 2 servings

- Ice cubes
- 2 scoops rice protein powder
- 1 apple, core removed and sliced into wedges
- 1 cup spinach
- 2 tbsp. almonds
- ¼ cup uncooked oats
- Cinnamon to taste
- 1 cup almond milk

Blend and drink

283 calories, 30 grams protein per serving

Super Food Smoothie

Makes 1 serving

- Ice cubes
- 1 scoop whey protein powder
- ½ cup frozen cherries
- ½ cup frozen strawberries
- ½ cup frozen blueberries
- ½ banana
- ½ cup chopped beets
- 1 tbsp. ground flaxseed
- 1 cup coconut water

Blend and drink

329 calories, 28 grams protein per serving

