

Protein Toolkit

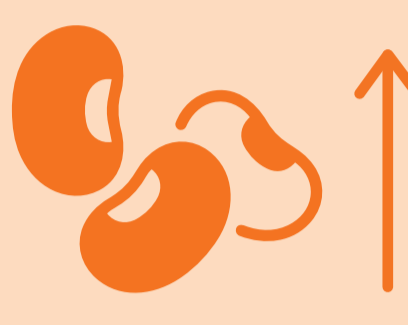




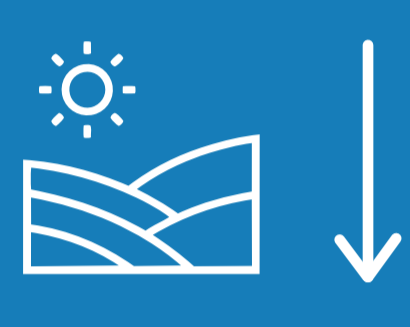
Plant Protein: for health and planet

Considerations for shifting towards flexitarian diets and plant-based protein

Increasing the proportion of plant-based protein within a flexitarian-style diet is generally not considered a concern for overall protein adequacy. Due to differences in the nutritional composition of plant and animal foods, dietary patterns with a higher contribution from plant protein tend to provide more fibre and phytochemicals and lower levels of saturated fat. At a population level, a shift towards more plant-based diets may help reduce risk factors associated with non-communicable diseases, such as elevated LDL cholesterol and hypertension, and may also support gut microbial diversity and influence inflammatory processes. These factors may contribute to a lower overall disease burden and potential benefits for healthcare costs¹.

Environmental sustainability is also an important consideration. Diets with a higher proportion of plant-based foods are generally associated with lower greenhouse gas emissions and reduced resource use, including land and water, compared with diets that rely more heavily on animal-based foods. Reduced reliance on animal-based foods is therefore considered one approach that may support progress towards climate and environmental targets.







Potential benefits of increasing plant protein intake

 High in Fibre – Healthy Fats (oil, nuts, seeds, avocado)	 Reduction in NCDs (or non-communicable diseases)	 Plant proteins = planetary health
 Less water use	 Less greenhouse gas emissions	 Less land use

Key Considerations for Shifting to Plant-Based Protein

A key barrier to including more plant foods in the diet is a lack of knowledge of how to prepare and incorporate them into usual day-to-day patterns. Guidance on many easy meals ideas that can be made as part of a varied and flexitarian dietary pattern is important for supporting a plant-based dietary approach.

These top plant protein sources provide good amounts of protein, with more fibre and less saturated fats and can therefore contribute to better health for people and planet².

 Tofu 12g/100g	 Tempeh 21g/100g	 Pulses 6-8g/100g	 Soy alternatives to milk 3g/100ml	 Soy alternatives to yogurt 4g/100ml
 Mycoprotein (known as Quorn®) 13g/100g	 Nuts 20g/100g	 Seeds 30g/100g	 Buckwheat 4g/100g	 Quinoa (dry) 4g/100g


Whatever dietary pattern you follow, there are many ways you can explore plant proteins. You could:

- Try one fully plant-based day per week, for example a meatless Monday.
- Try one fully plant-based meal per day, for example a plant-rich breakfast.
- Swap half of your meat in meals with plant-based alternatives like lentils, beans or soy.
- Try adding extra plant foods to your diet, for example sprinkling some roasted chickpeas over a salad or topping your porridge with seeds and Soy alternative to yogurt.

Meal ideas

Protein content is approximate and may vary based on brands purchased.

<p>Breakfast</p> <p>Blueberry and almond porridge – 22g protein</p> <p>Serve 50g of oats with 300ml Soy drink, a handful of blueberries and a sprinkle of almonds.</p>	<p>Lunch</p> <p>Falafel and hummus wrap – 12g protein</p> <p>Spread 50g (2 tbsp) of hummus on a wholemeal wrap with slices of cucumber and baby spinach, top with 2-3 falafels before folding the sides over and tightly rolling it up.</p>	<p>Snack</p> <p>Roasted chickpeas – 9g protein (per 100g)</p> <p>Drain 1 tin (400g) of chickpeas and combine with 1 tbsp of olive oil, black pepper and curry powder. Spread evenly onto a baking tray and roast at 180°C for 25 minutes or until crispy. Shake the tray halfway through roasting.</p>	<p>Dinner</p> <p>Tofu stir fry with vegetables and cashews – 30g protein</p> <p>Fry 2 chopped spring onions, 1 grated garlic clove and a grated thumb sized piece of ginger in 1 tbsp of olive oil. Add vegetables of choice, for example peppers, bean sprouts, carrot strips and sliced cabbage, or a pre-chopped and mixed bag for ease for 4-5 minutes. Add 1 tbsp of Soy sauce, a dash of lemon juice and 200g of marinated tofu pieces. Serve with 250g of cooked noodles (of choice) and top with a handful of cashews.</p>
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1. Craig WJ, Mangels AR, Fresán U, et al. The Safe and Effective Use of Plant-Based Diets with Guidelines for Health Professionals. *Nutrients*. 2021;13(11):4144. Published 2021 Nov 19. doi:10.3390/nu13114144

2. Poore, J., Nemecek, T. Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers. *Science* 2018, 360, 987–992. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29853680/>