

# PORK

## A NATURAL SOURCE OF PROTEIN

### The POWER OF PROTEIN

Protein is vital to every cell in the body:

- ✓ repairs body tissues
- ✓ builds enzymes, hormones and muscles
- ✓ supports the immune system
- ✓ regulates chemical reactions in the body
- ✓ helps form blood cells
- ✓ provides energy

Pork has all the essential amino acids or 'building blocks' needed for optimal health in every bite.

When compared to pork, most plant proteins are not as well digested and/or have limited amounts of one or more of the essential amino acids. Legumes, however, contain fibre and complex carbohydrates, making them a great alternative to rice and pasta to create a balanced meal.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Healthy amounts of both animal and plant proteins improve diet quality and have complementary benefits when eaten together.



**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Pork tenderloin is as lean as boneless, skinless chicken breast.

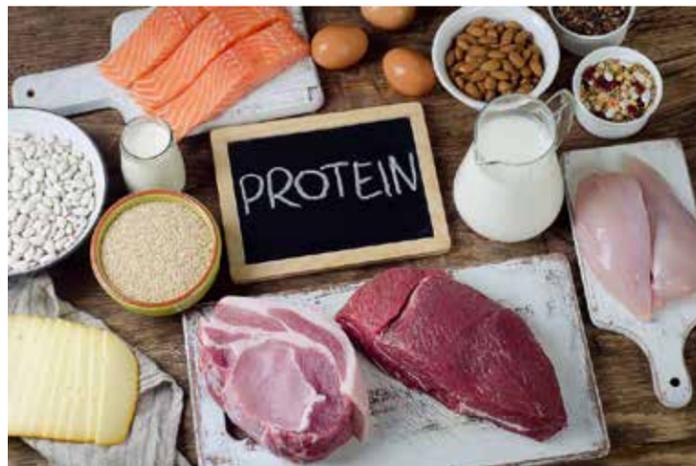
### How much is ENOUGH?

Protein should provide 10 to 35% of total daily calories for adults. A recent Health Canada survey found adults are at the lower end of the acceptable range with 17% of calories.

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Loss of muscle mass and function begins at age 30 which may lead to sarcopenia.

Since protein is needed to build and maintain muscles, the amount of protein an adult needs is determined by their weight. The current recommendation is 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight.

However, experts suggest adults may need more protein than this recommendation. Studies show 1.0 – 1.2 grams protein per kilogram body weight is ideal to stimulate muscle growth. Even greater benefits may be seen with higher protein intakes and when combined with physical activity.



### Choosing PROTEIN for your plate

With so many options available, keep these tips in mind when choosing the protein for your plate:

- Choose lean or extra-lean cuts of meat more often. Look for the word 'loin' on the package label.
- Vary your protein choices. Eating a variety of protein-packed foods each week alleviates boredom, changes up your meals, varies nutrient intake and enhances health benefits.
- Rethink your breakfast and lunch choices to include eggs, yogurt, ham and cheese instead of carbohydrate-rich foods such as cereal, bagels, toast, pastries, sandwiches, pasta.
- Sprinkle unsalted nuts or seeds on salads, use them in stuffing or make them part of a healthy snack.
- Add legumes, such as beans, to chili, stews, soups and casseroles.

### MORE TO PORK than just protein

Pork is a powerhouse of nutrition! Every bite provides high-quality protein, energy and key vitamins and minerals. Pork is also naturally low in sodium and saturated fat.

- Pork is loaded with important B vitamins including **B6** and **B12**. Your body depends on daily replenishing of B vitamins to function properly.
- Pork is the leading food source of **thiamin**. Thiamin helps convert food into energy, regulate appetite and maintain the normal function of the nervous system, heart and muscles.
- Pork is the best meat source of **riboflavin**; it helps keep your nervous system, skin and eyes healthy.
- Pork is an excellent source of **selenium**, a mineral that acts like an antioxidant by helping prevent and repair cell damage.
- Pork is a good source of **iron**, an essential mineral for the body since it helps maintain healthy red blood cells.
- Pork delivers a good supply of **magnesium and phosphorus**. Both minerals help to strengthen bones and teeth.

### Animal and plant foods ARE BETTER TOGETHER

Food synergy is the idea of two different foods interacting to deliver greater nutritional value—and greater potential health benefits—than if they are eaten alone. In other words, eating certain whole foods together may be more beneficial than eating them separately.

Combining vegetables and whole grains with lean meats provides a wide spectrum of essential nutrients along with a satisfying eating experience—ideally shared with family and friends. These benefits aren't found in highly processed foods, vitamin pills or other nutrition supplements such as protein powder and protein bars. Whole foods make great nutritional sense!

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
Pork provides the 'meat factor' phenomenon which enhances the absorption of iron and zinc in other foods.



### Optimizing MUSCLE GROWTH

Protein quality, the amount consumed per meal and timing of consumption can stimulate muscle development.

Estimates are that 25 to 30 grams of high-quality protein foods at breakfast, lunch and dinner gives adults the best chance to maintain or improve muscle mass. This can be maximized by ensuring regular physical activity.

Good protein choices include: lean meats such as pork, fish, skinless poultry and low fat dairy. These foods also contain nutrients that we are not getting enough of from our diet: iron, zinc, magnesium and vitamins B6 and B12.

## LEAN PORK: Nutrient-rich fast food

A hectic schedule shouldn't mean sacrificing eating well. Get inspired by these meal ideas!

### PORK SATAY



### SWEET AND SOUR PORK



### RAMEN



### PORK BURGER



### PASTA AND PORK MEAT BALLS



### FAJITAS



### PORK SOUVLAKI



## GINGER PORK Stir Fry

Serves 4

1 Tbsp	canola oil
1 Tbsp	grated ginger root
2	cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp	red pepper flakes
¾ lb	<b>pork stir fry strips</b>
1 cup	Chinese broccoli, sliced
1 cup	snap peas, trimmed
½ cup	beef broth
¼ cup	oyster sauce
	hot cooked rice for serving



1. In large nonstick skillet or wok, heat oil over medium-high heat. Stir fry ginger, garlic and red pepper flakes until fragrant, 30-45 seconds.
2. Add pork and stir fry until almost cooked through, 2-3 minutes.
3. Add vegetables and stir fry until tender-crisp, about 2 minutes.
4. Add broth and oyster sauce, simmer until slightly reduced, about 3 minutes.
5. Serve over hot cooked rice.

For home chef and meat cutting videos, visit [verifiedcanadianpork.com](http://verifiedcanadianpork.com).



Canadian Pork Council  
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