



Protein is a key part of the diet. Research shows many adults over the age of 60 are not eating enough protein to maintain muscle. A loss of muscle can lead to a loss of strength which limits a person’s ability to carry out daily activities, like bathing, cooking, or cleaning. This can eventually lead to the loss of independence.

Adults age 51+ should eat 5 1/2 ounce equivalents from the MyPlate Protein Food Group per day. Examples of ounce equivalents (oz. eq.) are below.

Meat and Pork	Poultry	Eggs	Seafood	Nuts and seeds	Dried beans and peas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 small steak = 3 1/2-4 oz. eq. 1 small hamburger = 2-3 oz. eq. 1 oz canned beef = 1 oz. eq. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 small chicken breast = 3 oz. eq. 1 sandwich slice of turkey = 1 oz. eq. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 = 1 oz. eq. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 can of tuna = 3-4 oz. eq. 1 small salmon steak = 4-6 oz. eq. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 almonds = 1 oz. eq. 1 Tablespoon peanut butter = 1 oz. eq. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1/4 cup cooked beans or peas = 1 oz. eq. 2 Tablespoons hummus = 1 oz. eq.

Canned Beef, a Tasty Protein Treat

Canned beef is a great option for adding protein to your diet because it:

1. can be eaten without cooking;
2. Is easy to chew, and
3. can be added to a variety of recipes!

Canned beef is packaged in 24 ounce cans, which is about 2 1/2 cups of meat!

Selection:

- Choose cans that are free from leaks, bulges, and dents.
- Check the “Best by” or “Best if used by” date on the can.



Storage:

- Store unopened canned beef in a cool, dry place.
- After opening, store beef in a tightly covered glass or plastic container and place in the refrigerator for up to 3-4 days. You can also freeze it for up to 2 months in a tightly covered container.

Nutrition: 3 oz (~1/3 cup) of drained **canned beef** provides:

- 180 calories and 17g of protein
- Is a good source of iron
- Counts as 3 1-oz equivalents from the MyPlate protein group

Uses:

- Combine with tomato sauce and serve over whole grain pasta for a hearty pasta dinner.
- Add to a vegetable stir-fry, casseroles, soups, or stews.

Protect Yourself, Friends, and Family during this holiday season

Holidays bring together family, friends, and delicious food. While you are celebrating, bacteria can be multiplying on your delicious food. These harmful bacteria can cause foodborne illness. Foodborne illness has symptoms similar to the flu, such as nausea, vomiting, fever, or diarrhea that can occur within hours of eating contaminated food, or you may not notice symptoms for weeks.



Keep yourself and your loved ones safe and healthy this holiday season by following these food safety tips.

- * **Cook** meats to their proper internal temperature.
- * **Separate** raw meats from other foods, and always use different cutting boards and knives.
- * **Maintain** hot food at a temperature of 140 °F or higher.
- * **Refrigerate** foods within two hours after a meal. Foods can stay safe in the refrigerator for up to four days or in a freezer for up to six months.

Stuffed Bell Peppers

Serves: 4
Serving Size: 1 pepper

Ingredients:

1/2 can beef (about 1 1/4 cup)
4 bell peppers (any color)
1/2 cup onion, chopped
1 (16 oz) can diced tomatoes
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup brown rice
1/4 teaspoon pepper
4 teaspoons shredded cheddar cheese



Instructions:

1. Cut tops from peppers; discard seeds and membranes.
2. Cook canned beef, onions, canned diced tomatoes in a skillet until simmering (about 5 minutes).
3. Add water, rice, and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and cover. Simmer 15-20 minutes, or until rice is tender.
4. Stuff peppers with meat mixture and top each with 1 teaspoon of cheese.
5. Place peppers in a baking dish and bake at 350°F for 30 minutes.
6. Remove, let cool for 2-3 minutes, and enjoy!

Nutritional analysis (1 pepper): 300 calories, 16g fat, 8g saturated, 0g trans, 400mg sodium, 18g carbohydrates, 4g fiber, 6g sugar, 21g protein

This recipe is adapted from <http://www.food.com/recipe/ground-beef-stuffed-green-bell-peppers-with-cheese-1356>

Helpful Resources

Polk County Congregate Meals
(515) 286-3679

Commodity and Supplemental Foods
(515) 286-3655

Nutrition, Food Preparation and Food Safety
ISU AnswerLine
1-800-262-3804

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