



THE SCOOP ON NUTRITION

From Basil Chef of Nutrition



Volume 8 Number 8

April 2018

Why Protein...

Whether you are an Olympic athlete or an elementary school student, proteins provide your body with the building blocks to grow and stay strong. They also maintain and replace body tissue, such as muscles, bones, blood, and body organs. Growing children need protein to become strong, support their immune system, and develop properly.

There are a variety of protein rich foods to help you assure your child is getting enough. Traditional meat items are usually well accepted, but peanuts, seeds, lentils, beans, legumes, eggs, fish and seafood are good sources, too. Cheese, yogurt, and milk also contain some protein.

Protein snacks are the perfect way to fill up, and give us longer-lasting energy than the usual, carb-heavy options. With so many different options of protein available, these daily servings are easy to fill! Most children are easily pleased with scrambled eggs, macaroni and cheese, or a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

Lean, low-fat and healthy are the best protein choices. Your school's cafeteria offers a lean, low fat and healthy protein daily. Through the Wellness Wednesday program, we are introducing unique protein foods to help encourage your child to try new foods!



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Chef Basil's **Wellness Wednesday**

Mediterranean Chickpea Salad is Chef Basil's featured recipe. Chickpeas, or Garbonzo beans, are one of the world's healthiest foods! Garbanzos can boost your energy because of their high iron content. Chickpeas are naturally low in fat, high in dietary fiber and rich in vitamins and minerals.



RECIPE *Mediterranean Chickpea Salad*

**4 Cups canned chickpeas, drained
1/4 Cup cucumbers, diced
1/4 Cup chopped fresh spinach
1 tsp garlic powder
2 tsp oregano dried
1 1/2 Tbsp lemon juice
1/2 Cup olive oil**



Place beans, cucumber and spinach in a large bowl and gently mix. In a separate bowl whisk together garlic, oregano, lemon juice and oil until mixed. Pour over bean mixture and gently toss. Refrigerate until ready.

This recipe can also be used to make hummus. Combine all ingredients in the food processor or blender and blend until smooth, add a little water to get the consistency needed.

For more information visit www.thenutritiongroup.biz