

UPGRADED HEALTH

20-Minute High-Protein Dinners

10 additional dinners using simple ingredients and clear shortcuts.

Additional recipes to use with your 30-day plan. Each full recipe makes two portions and includes an estimated protein amount.

Inside your guide

Complete ingredient lists and instructions

Practical storage and substitution notes

A recipe index and a two-recipe shopping worksheet

A companion to The 30-Day High-Protein Meal Plan for Women Over 40.

By Upgraded Health

How to use this collection

Choose a recipe and replace one of the corresponding meals or snacks in your main calendar. Prepare one full recipe for two people, or save half safely for later. These ingredients are not included in the main grocery lists; add them when you make a swap.

All ten dinners have estimated total times of 15-20 minutes using the specified ready-cooked chicken, grains, canned fish or thawed shrimp. No raw-chicken cooking or seafood thawing is hidden in that time. Read the complete ingredient list before starting and follow packaged-food heating instructions.

Protein and portions

Protein figures use the same approximate ingredient inputs as the main guide. They are not a full nutrient analysis or an individual target. If your brands or portions differ, recalculate. Recipes and timings have not been kitchen-tested.

Food safety

Keep perishables at 40°F or below. Refrigerate within 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F. Use cooked leftovers within 3-4 days, sooner if a label requires it. For best texture, make assembled fruit cups, wraps and salads for the next 1-2 days. Reheat leftovers to 165°F; pack chilled foods with two cold sources. [1-3]

Allergens

Check labels for milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, soy, wheat, peanuts, tree nuts and sesame where relevant. Egg-free recipes also require egg-free packaged bread or other components if avoiding egg ingredients.

Choose a recipe

Quick dinners

- Q01 Chicken Salsa Rice Skillet | ~46 g | p. 4
- Q02 Salmon Pesto White Bean Bowls | ~39 g | p. 5
- Q03 Quick Chicken Couscous Plates | ~47 g | p. 6
- Q04 Shrimp & Edamame Rice Bowls | ~45 g | p. 7
- Q05 Cottage Cheese Tomato Lentil Pasta | ~38 g | p. 8
- Q06 Egg & Bean Dinner Scramble | ~31 g | p. 9
- Q07 Chicken, Hummus & Warm Pita Plates | ~45 g | p. 10
- Q08 Tofu Peanut Edamame Skillet | ~37 g | p. 11
- Q09 Warm Tuna & White Bean Toasts | ~42 g | p. 12
- Q10 Chicken Mushroom Quinoa Soup | ~44 g | p. 13

Chicken Salsa Rice Skillet

Q01 / MAKES 2 SERVINGS / 15 MIN

Estimated protein: 46 g per serving. One serving is half the complete recipe.

Ingredients

260 g (9.2 oz) Ready-to-eat cooked chicken breast
300 g (10.6 oz) Ready-cooked brown rice
200 g (7.1 oz) Canned black beans, drained and rinsed
150 g (5.3 oz) Tomato salsa
100 g (3.5 oz) Baby spinach

Make it

Start. Dice chicken. Combine chicken, rice, beans and salsa with 40 ml water in a skillet.

Next. Cover and heat over medium heat for 6-8 minutes, stirring, until chicken reaches 165°F.

Finish. Fold in spinach until wilted and divide into two bowls.

Prep & serving note

Uses fully cooked chicken and rice. Starting with raw chicken adds time.

Substitutions

For gluten-free needs, choose suitable grain products and check every sauce, seasoning and packaged ingredient. Dairy-free swaps may lower protein; recalculate with your labels.

Protein estimate: ready-to-eat cooked chicken breast ~68 g/batch, canned black beans, drained and rinsed ~13 g/batch, ready-cooked brown rice ~8 g/batch. Other ingredients are included in the total. Values and rounding vary by brand.

Salmon Pesto White Bean Bowls

Q02 / MAKES 2 SERVINGS / 15 MIN

Estimated protein: 39 g per serving. One serving is half the complete recipe.

Ingredients

4 pouches Plain salmon, 2.5 oz pouch (at least 13 g protein)

300 g (10.6 oz) Canned white beans, drained and rinsed

40 g (1.4 oz) Basil pesto

250 g (8.8 oz) Cherry tomatoes

100 g (3.5 oz) Baby spinach

Make it

Start. Halve tomatoes. Cook in a covered skillet with 40 ml water for 4 minutes.

Next. Add beans and salmon and heat through for 3-4 minutes.

Finish. Fold in spinach and pesto, heating until spinach wilts. Divide in two.

Prep & serving note

Shelf-stable plain salmon pouches are the shortcut. Pesto often contains milk and nuts.

Substitutions

For gluten-free needs, choose suitable grain products and check every sauce, seasoning and packaged ingredient. Dairy-free swaps may lower protein; recalculate with your labels.

Protein estimate: plain salmon, 2.5 oz pouch ~52 g/batch, canned white beans, drained and rinsed ~20 g/batch, baby spinach ~3 g/batch. Other ingredients are included in the total. Values and rounding vary by brand.

Quick Chicken Couscous Plates

Q03 / MAKES 2 SERVINGS / 15 MIN

Estimated protein: 47 g per serving. One serving is half the complete recipe.

Ingredients

260 g (9.2 oz) Ready-to-eat cooked chicken breast
120 g (4.2 oz) Quick whole-wheat couscous, dry
150 g (5.3 oz) Jarred roasted peppers, drained
150 g (5.3 oz) Canned chickpeas, drained and rinsed
30 ml (2 tbsp) Lemon juice
10 ml (2 tsp) Olive oil

Make it

Start. Prepare quick couscous with the package-specified boiling water and standing time.

Next. Meanwhile, heat diced chicken, chickpeas and sliced roasted peppers in a skillet with 30 ml water until chicken is 165°F.

Finish. Fluff couscous and toss with chicken mixture, lemon juice and oil.

Prep & serving note

Choose 5-minute couscous. For gluten-free, use ready-cooked quinoa and follow its heating directions.

Substitutions

For gluten-free needs, choose suitable grain products and check every sauce, seasoning and packaged ingredient. Dairy-free swaps may lower protein; recalculate with your labels.

Protein estimate: ready-to-eat cooked chicken breast ~68 g/batch, quick whole-wheat couscous, dry ~16 g/batch, canned chickpeas, drained and rinsed ~10 g/batch. Other ingredients are included in the total. Values and rounding vary by brand.

Shrimp & Edamame Rice Bowls

Q04 / MAKES 2 SERVINGS / 15 MIN

Estimated protein: 45 g per serving. One serving is half the complete recipe.

Ingredients

300 g (10.6 oz) Ready-to-eat cooked peeled shrimp, thawed

200 g (7.1 oz) Frozen shelled edamame

300 g (10.6 oz) Ready-cooked brown rice

100 g (3.5 oz) Carrots, trimmed

30 ml (2 tbsp) Lemon juice

10 ml (2 tsp) Olive oil

Make it

Start. Cook edamame as labeled. Grate carrot and heat rice as labeled.

Next. Heat cooked shrimp with a splash of water in a covered skillet until 165°F.

Finish. Divide rice, edamame, shrimp and carrot between bowls; drizzle with lemon juice and oil.

Prep & serving note

Use cooked, thawed shrimp. Thawing and raw-seafood cooking are additional tasks.

Substitutions

For gluten-free needs, choose suitable grain products and check every sauce, seasoning and packaged ingredient. Dairy-free swaps may lower protein; recalculate with your labels.

Protein estimate: ready-to-eat cooked peeled shrimp, thawed ~60 g/batch, frozen shelled edamame ~22 g/batch, ready-cooked brown rice ~8 g/batch. Other ingredients are included in the total. Values and rounding vary by brand.

Cottage Cheese Tomato Lentil Pasta

Q05 / MAKES 2 SERVINGS / 20 MIN

Estimated protein: 38 g per serving. One serving is half the complete recipe.

Ingredients

120 g (4.2 oz) Red-lentil pasta, dry
350 g (12.3 oz) Plain cottage cheese
250 g (8.8 oz) Canned crushed tomatoes
100 g (3.5 oz) Baby spinach
10 ml (2 tsp) Olive oil
2 g (about 2 tsp) Dried oregano

Make it

Start. Cook lentil pasta according to package directions; reserve 1/2 cup pasta water.

Next. Meanwhile, simmer tomatoes with oil and oregano for 5 minutes. Add spinach to wilt.

Finish. Remove sauce from heat. Fold in drained pasta and cottage cheese, adding pasta water to loosen.

Prep & serving note

Use pasta with an 8-10 minute cook time and start boiling water first.

Substitutions

For gluten-free needs, choose suitable grain products and check every sauce, seasoning and packaged ingredient. Dairy-free swaps may lower protein; recalculate with your labels.

Protein estimate: plain cottage cheese ~42 g/batch, red-lentil pasta, dry ~28 g/batch, canned crushed tomatoes ~3 g/batch. Other ingredients are included in the total. Values and rounding vary by brand.

Egg & Bean Dinner Scramble

Q06 / MAKES 2 SERVINGS / 15 MIN

Estimated protein: 31 g per serving. One serving is half the complete recipe.

Ingredients

4 Large eggs
200 g (7.1 oz) Liquid egg whites
200 g (7.1 oz) Canned black beans, drained and rinsed
120 g (4.2 oz) Tomato salsa
100 g (3.5 oz) Baby spinach
10 ml (2 tsp) Olive oil

Make it

Start. Heat oil in a nonstick skillet. Add beans, salsa and spinach; cook 3-4 minutes until hot.

Next. Beat eggs with whites and add to the skillet.

Finish. Stir gently until fully set, then divide into two bowls.

Prep & serving note

Eggs can work at dinner too. Add bread separately if desired; it is not in this recipe's estimate.

Substitutions

For gluten-free needs, choose suitable grain products and check every sauce, seasoning and packaged ingredient. Dairy-free swaps may lower protein; recalculate with your labels.

Protein estimate: large eggs ~24 g/batch, liquid egg whites ~21 g/batch, canned black beans, drained and rinsed ~13 g/batch. Other ingredients are included in the total. Values and rounding vary by brand.

Chicken, Hummus & Warm Pita Plates

Q07 / MAKES 2 SERVINGS / 15 MIN

Estimated protein: 45 g per serving. One serving is half the complete recipe.

Ingredients

260 g (9.2 oz) Ready-to-eat cooked chicken breast
120 g (4.2 oz) Prepared hummus
120 g (4.2 oz) Whole-wheat pita
200 g (7.1 oz) Cucumber
200 g (7.1 oz) Cherry tomatoes
20 ml Lemon juice

Make it

Start. Heat chicken as labeled until 165°F if reheating. Warm pitas in a dry skillet or toaster.

Next. Dice cucumber and halve tomatoes; toss with lemon juice.

Finish. Divide chicken, hummus, pita and vegetables between two plates.

Prep & serving note

Keep each component separate for a simple dinner plate. Use gluten-free pita if needed.

Substitutions

For gluten-free needs, choose suitable grain products and check every sauce, seasoning and packaged ingredient. Dairy-free swaps may lower protein; recalculate with your labels.

Protein estimate: ready-to-eat cooked chicken breast ~68 g/batch, whole-wheat pita ~11 g/batch, prepared hummus ~8 g/batch. Other ingredients are included in the total. Values and rounding vary by brand.

Tofu Peanut Edamame Skillet

Q08 / MAKES 2 SERVINGS / 20 MIN

Estimated protein: 37 g per serving. One serving is half the complete recipe.

Ingredients

350 g (12.3 oz) Extra-firm tofu, drained (at least 12 g protein per 100 g)

200 g (7.1 oz) Frozen shelled edamame

200 g (7.1 oz) Shredded cabbage

30 g (1.1 oz) Peanut butter

25 ml Lemon juice

10 ml (2 tsp) Olive oil

Make it

Start. Cook edamame as labeled. Pat tofu dry and cube.

Next. Heat oil in a wide skillet; brown tofu for 8-10 minutes. Add cabbage and 30 ml water, cover and cook 3 minutes.

Finish. Whisk peanut butter and lemon juice with 40 ml warm water. Add with edamame and toss until hot.

Prep & serving note

A nonstick skillet and pre-shredded cabbage keep this within the estimated time.

Substitutions

For gluten-free needs, choose suitable grain products and check every sauce, seasoning and packaged ingredient. Dairy-free swaps may lower protein; recalculate with your labels.

Protein estimate: extra-firm tofu, drained ~42 g/batch, frozen shelled edamame ~22 g/batch, peanut butter ~8 g/batch. Other ingredients are included in the total. Values and rounding vary by brand.

Warm Tuna & White Bean Toasts

Q09 / MAKES 2 SERVINGS / 15 MIN

Estimated protein: 42 g per serving. One serving is half the complete recipe.

Ingredients

2 cans Light tuna in water, 5 oz can (20 g protein; drain)
250 g (8.8 oz) Canned white beans, drained and rinsed
120 g (4.2 oz) Whole-grain bread
60 g (2.1 oz) Part-skim mozzarella, shredded
200 g (7.1 oz) Cherry tomatoes
20 ml Lemon juice

Make it

Start. Toast bread. Mash beans with lemon juice and fold in drained tuna.

Next. Divide over toast and top with mozzarella. Broil on a tray for 2-4 minutes, watching closely, until cheese melts and filling is hot.

Finish. Serve with halved tomatoes.

Prep & serving note

Use four small slices or two large slices of bread totaling 120 g.

Substitutions

For gluten-free needs, choose suitable grain products and check every sauce, seasoning and packaged ingredient. Dairy-free swaps may lower protein; recalculate with your labels.

Protein estimate: light tuna in water, 5 oz can ~40 g/batch, canned white beans, drained and rinsed ~16 g/batch, part-skim mozzarella, shredded ~14 g/batch. Other ingredients are included in the total. Values and rounding vary by brand.

Chicken Mushroom Quinoa Soup

Q10 / MAKES 2 SERVINGS / 20 MIN

Estimated protein: 44 g per serving. One serving is half the complete recipe.

Ingredients

260 g (9.2 oz) Ready-to-eat cooked chicken breast
250 g (8.8 oz) Ready-cooked quinoa
200 g (7.1 oz) Mushrooms
650 ml Low-sodium broth
100 g (3.5 oz) Baby spinach
10 ml (2 tsp) Olive oil
6 g Garlic, peeled

Make it

Start. Slice mushrooms and mince garlic. Heat oil in a saucepan; cook mushrooms for 5 minutes and garlic for 30 seconds.

Next. Add broth, diced chicken and quinoa. Simmer 5-6 minutes until chicken is 165°F.

Finish. Stir in spinach to wilt and divide into two bowls.

Prep & serving note

Use ready-cooked quinoa and chicken; dry quinoa will need a different liquid amount and timing.

Substitutions

For gluten-free needs, choose suitable grain products and check every sauce, seasoning and packaged ingredient. Dairy-free swaps may lower protein; recalculate with your labels.

Protein estimate: ready-to-eat cooked chicken breast ~68 g/batch, ready-cooked quinoa ~11 g/batch, mushrooms ~6 g/batch. Other ingredients are included in the total. Values and rounding vary by brand.

Try two recipes this week

Start with Q01 Chicken Salsa Rice Skillet and Q02 Salmon Pesto White Bean Bowls. Together they make four portions. The list below includes one full batch of each recipe.

Ingredient	Total for both recipes
Ready-to-eat cooked chicken breast	260 g (9.2 oz)
Ready-cooked brown rice	300 g (10.6 oz)
Canned black beans, drained and rinsed	200 g (7.1 oz)
Tomato salsa	150 g (5.3 oz)
Baby spinach	200 g (7.1 oz)
Plain salmon, 2.5 oz pouch (at least 13 g protein)	4 pouches
Canned white beans, drained and rinsed	300 g (10.6 oz)
Basil pesto	40 g (1.4 oz)
Cherry tomatoes	250 g (8.8 oz)

Make your own swap

Original recipe: _____

New recipe and code: _____

Remove from grocery list: _____

Add to grocery list: _____

Prep, chill or thaw reminder: _____

References & recipe notes

[1] FoodSafety.gov: Safe Minimum Internal Temperatures

<https://www.foodsafety.gov/food-safety-charts/safe-minimum-internal-temperatures>

[2] USDA FSIS: Leftovers and Food Safety

<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation/food-safety-basics/leftovers-and-food-safety>

[3] USDA FSIS: Keeping Bag Lunches Safe

<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation/food-safety-basics/keeping-bag-lunches-safe>

Food and nutrition references

USDA FoodData Central: a resource for checking ingredient composition

<https://fdc.nal.usda.gov/>

Example product label: FAGE plain Greek yogurt

<https://usa.fage/products/yogurt/fage-total-0>

Example product label: StarKist light tuna in water

<https://starkist.com/product/chunk-light-tuna-in-water-can/>

The figures in this program are approximate planning inputs, not a verified nutrient analysis of specific purchased products. The full input table is in the main guide. Compare your labels and adjust as needed.