

# The Protein Myth

These days everyone seems to be concerned about whether or not they are getting enough protein in their diet, and conflicting advice suggests that we need anywhere from 18 to 60 grams of protein a day. So, how much and, most importantly, what kind of protein do we really need? Your body's daily requirement to replenish the protein which has been lost, whether through perspiration, excrement and urine, hair loss or sloughed-off skin is approximately 23 grams per day.

Now let's keep this simple.

-The human body is mainly built from proteins.

-Amino acids are the building blocks of protein.

-There are twenty three amino acids.

-Eight amino acids are called "essential" because they are not produced within our bodies, and can only be obtained through food. They are:

Valine, Leucine, Phenylalanine, Methionine, Lysine, Threonine, Tryptophan, & Isoleucine

It is absolutely necessary to include these essential amino acids in your diet every day. Protein is the most complex of all food elements, and the process by which it is broken down and used within your body is the most complicated. It is also the most difficult for your body to digest.

Your body uses more energy during the digestion of protein than any other food! Consuming excess protein uses up a tremendous amount of the body's energy, slows your body down and causes the body to store protein as fat. Animal protein, in particular, can be harmful, causing heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure, ulcers, arthritis and obesity; it impairs our kidneys and liver; leaches calcium, zinc, vitamin B, iron, and magnesium from our bodies, and damages our organs and cells, contributing to faster aging.

With the exception of fruit which is digested very rapidly, the average time for food to pass through your body's gastrointestinal tract is between twenty-five and thirty hours. That time more than doubles when protein is eaten! So how do we get those essential amino acids without eating excess protein- particularly animal protein- and without burning up so much precious energy?

## Plant Protein vs. Meat Protein

What is the largest and strongest animal on the planet? If you guessed an elephant, you are right! And if you had to guess which animals are among the strongest, those would include horses, buffalo, and cattle, right? These animals, along with camels and mules, have been used for centuries for their superior strength and endurance. What do all of these animals eat? Grass, leafy matter, fruits and other vegetation. Not one of them eats meat! So what about the lion? The lion, who eats exclusively meat, sleeps twenty hours a day, and has very little stamina or endurance.

Protein is not built in the body by eating protein. Protein is built from the amino acids in food and what is most important is how well the amino acids in your food can be utilized by the your body.

Please read the "Enzyme Factor" by Dr. Hiromi Shinya, Chief of the Surgical Endoscopy Unit at Beth Israel Medical Center and Clinical Professor of Surgery at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Dr. Shinya has personally examined the colons of more than 300,000 patients. In regards to consuming animal protein, Dr. Shinya in his book "The Enzyme Factor", explains, "...it [animal protein] will not be completely broken down and absorbed by the gastrointestinal system. Instead, it will decompose in the intestine, producing large amounts of toxins and free radicals. If you ingest an excess amount of protein by consuming meat (including processed foods containing meat) and milk (including all dairy products), the damage to your health can be even more serious...because these animal foods do not contain any dietary fiber, they accelerate the deterioration of your intestinal health."

Meat contains large amounts of fat and cholesterol. Protein does not increase muscular size or strength and it does not produce energy. In fact, protein burns up large amounts of energy. Interestingly enough, the available amino acid content found in plants far exceeds the available content found in meat. Let's have a look at the availability of amino acids in meat. First, amino acids are somewhat delicate. The heat used in cooking meat destroys many of the amino acids, making them unavailable to your body. These unavailable,

or unusable, amino acids now become toxic, eventually being stored as fat. Something else to consider is the fiber content in meat. There isn't any!

Plants synthesize amino acids from the earth, air, and water, and humans can derive all of the "essential" amino acids from plants. By eating fruits, nuts, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, seeds, sprouts, and sea vegetables (like Kelp) you will receive all the amino acids necessary for your body to build the protein your body needs. There are many fruits, veggies and nuts which contain ALL eight "essential" amino acids. Some of these are: **Bananas, tomatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, corn, peas, cucumbers, brussels sprouts, eggplant, carrots, kale, okra, potatoes, summer squash, sweet potatoes, sunflower seeds, peanuts, sesame seeds, and beans.** Additionally, **Soybeans** contain an abundance of essential amino acids, are easily digested, and contain a lot of dietary fiber with no animal fat.

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## Lunch & Dinner Recipes with lots of Animal Protein

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### **A Satisfying Barley Dish**

#### **Barley Risotto With Spinach and Parmesan**

This warm and wonderful dish will help fill you up and boost your fiber intake.

#### **Serves 4—6**

2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil  
1 small onion, chopped  
3/4 cup barley  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme, or 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme  
Salt and pepper  
4 cups reduced-sodium chicken or vegetable broth, divided  
1 package (10 oz) frozen spinach, thawed  
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

#### **Instructions**

Warm oil in large, heavy nonstick saucepan over medium-low heat. Add onion; cook 4 minutes, stirring. Add barley and thyme; stir to coat. Season with salt and pepper. Add 1 cup of the broth; bring to a simmer. Cook 10 minutes, stirring often. Stir in remaining 3 cups broth. Cook 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add spinach, breaking up chunks with a wooden spoon. Cook 5 to 10 minutes, until warmed through and barley is tender yet chewy. Serve hot, garnished with cheese.

#### **Nutritional information**

*Per serving:*  
180 calories  
4 g fat (1 g sat)  
26 g carbohydrate  
11 g protein  
1 mg sodium  
4 mg cholesterol

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#### **Balsamic Dijon Vinaigrette**

3 Tbsp. Balsamic vinegar  
2 Tbsp. Lemon juice

2 Tbsp. Dijon mustard  
1 Clove garlic, minced  
1/2 Cup Olive oil  
2 Tsp. Honey  
Salt & Pepper to taste.

Combine all ingredients and pour into a jar or cruet. Keep refrigerated.

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### **Oriental Sesame Dressing or Marinade**

3 Tbsp. Olive oil  
3 Tbsp. Honey  
1 Tbsp. Sesame oil  
1 Tbsp. Rice vinegar  
1 Tbsp. Soy sauce  
1 1/2 Tsp. Grated ginger  
1/2 Tsp. Red Pepper Flakes (optional)

Combine all ingredients and pour into a jar or cruet. Keep refrigerated.

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### **Brown Rice Waldorf Salad**

2 Medium Granny Smith apples  
2 stalks celery, minced  
2 Cups cooked brown rice  
3/4 Cup Dried cranberries  
3/4 Cup Chopped walnuts  
3/4 Cup Mayonnaise, we used vegan mayonnaise  
1/4 Cup Lemon Juice  
1/4 Cup Pure maple syrup  
1/4 Tsp. Sea salt

Remove the core and seeds from the apples and chop them into 1/2 inch pieces. I like to leave the peel on, especially if the apples are organic. Place the chopped apples in a bowl with the rest of the ingredients and mix together well.

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### **Pesto Portobellos**

Serves 8

8 Large Portobello caps  
2 Tbsp. Olive oil  
Salt to taste  
2/3 Cups Seasoned breadcrumbs  
2/3 Cups Prepared basil pesto  
1 Tbsp. grated lemon zest  
1 Tbsp. Balsamic vinegar  
1/3 Cup grated Romano or parmesan cheese  
Chopped parsley for a garnish

Preheat oven to 450°. Line 2 shallow baking sheets with aluminum foil. Gently wipe mushroom caps with a damp towel. Use a paring knife to carefully remove any bits of stem; chop stems finely. Lightly brush tops of caps with oil. Set caps gill side up in prepared pans. Sprinkle lightly with salt. Combine chopped stems,

breadcrumbs, pesto, lemon zest and vinegar. Spoon about 2 rounded tablespoons of topping into each mushroom.

Roast mushrooms on top rack for 5 minutes, switch to bottom rack. Continue roasting until tender, 10 to 15 minutes total. Sprinkle grated cheese on each mushroom cap and garnish with parsley. serve warm or at room temperature.

**Nutritional information**

*Per serving:*

230 calories

17 g fat (3 g sat)

11 g carbohydrate

6 g protein

500 mg sodium

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**Old Fashioned Lentil Soup**

Serves 10

7 1/2 cups water

1 garlic clove, minced

1 large onion, chopped

2 large carrots, coarsely chopped

2 stalks celery, coarsely chopped

1 1/2 cups lentils

1 vegetable bullion cube or red miso

1/2 teaspoon dried thyme

1 teaspoon oregano

1 to 2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped

1 teaspoon Hungarian paprika

1/2 teaspoon spike seasoning (optional)

1/2 teaspoon sea salt

1 cup fresh or frozen corn

Bring water to a boil in large pot. Add all ingredients to water and mix well. Bring back to a boil, and simmer covered over low heat for 1 hour.

**Nutritional information**

*Per serving:*

110 calories

.2 g fat (3 g sat)

21 g carbohydrate

7g protein

7g fiber