

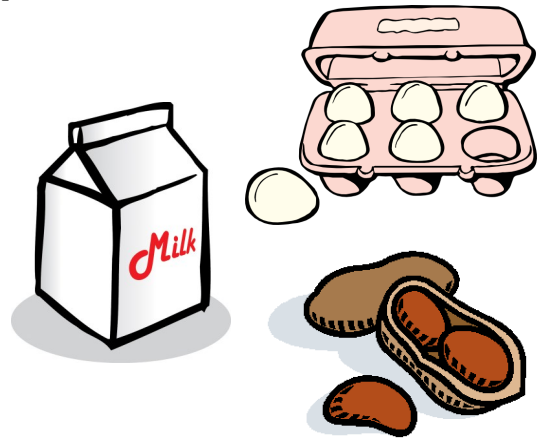
Protein

Are You Getting Enough?

Protein gives you the energy to get going and keep going. It is vital for maintaining health in your senior years. Sarcopenia (muscle loss), ranges anywhere from 0.5% to 2% of total muscle mass each year, starting between ages 30-50. While most people eating a Western diet get sufficient *quantity* of protein each day, many of us are not getting the *quality* of protein we need.

Eating the right amount of high-quality protein:

- Keeps your immune system functioning properly
- Maintains heart health
- Aids in recovery after exercise
- Helps in smooth functioning of nervous system
- Aids in sustaining bone health
- Helps you think clearly and may improve recall
- Helps you maintain healthy skin, nails, and hair
- Builds muscle and prevents muscle loss
- Aids in muscular contraction and coordination
- Prevents premature aging



How much Protein do you need?

- Adults need **0.8** grams of protein per kilogram of body weight to maintain health.
- New research says **physically active** people over age 65 should aim for 1g to 1.2g of protein per kg of body weight to maintain muscle mass and function (combined with twice-weekly progressive resistance exercise)
- To find out how much protein you need, take your weight in pounds and multiply it by **0.45** to give you your weight in kilograms. Next, multiply that number by **either 0.8, 1, or 1.2** to reach the recommended grams of protein per day based on age and physical activity level*.

Why is exercise so important?

- Exercise increases your ability to rebuild muscle.
- People who are physically *inactive* can lose 3-5% of their muscle mass per decade after age 30.
- The best exercise for protecting muscle and strength is resistance exercise, such as lifting weights.



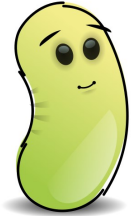
**Too much protein can be harmful to people with kidney disease, diabetes, and some other conditions, check with your doctor or dietitian before making any major dietary changes.*

What is "High Quality" Protein?

- Processed or lunch meats can have a high protein content, but they're also high in salt and fat—try to get your protein from low-sodium, low-fat sources.
- Include a variety of protein sources in your diet. Vegetarian sources, poultry, and fish are best. Have red meat and whole milk only on occasion, as they contain saturated fats.

Examples of High Quality Protein:

- **Fish** - low in saturated fat, fish like salmon, trout, sardines and herring are also high in omega-3 fatty acids.
- **Poultry** - with the skin removed!
- **Dairy products** - milk, cheese, and yogurt, especially Greek yogurt. Cottage cheese is very high in protein but also in sodium. If you're monitoring your salt intake please be advised that most cheeses are high in sodium, always check labels and serving sizes.
- **Beans** - packed full of both protein and fiber, they can help you feel fuller for longer!
- **Nuts and seeds** - high in fiber and "good" fats. One ounce (about a handful) of almonds gives you 6 grams of protein.
- **Tofu and soy products** - High in protein and low in fat, these sources are often less expensive than meat—good for your wallet, good for your health!



How much is one "serving"?

- 2 ½ oz or ½ cup - fish, poultry & meat
- 2 eggs
- ¾ cup - cooked beans/lentils
- ¼ cup - nuts/seeds
- 2 Tbsp - nut butters



Timing is Everything!

- Saving all your protein allowance for your final meal is ineffective.
- Equally distributing protein intake over three meals during the day is just as important as getting enough protein overall.
- Try to aim for about 25 grams at each meal and include protein in snacks as well.

Eating too little protein can result in:

- A sluggish metabolism
- Trouble losing weight
- Blood sugar changes that can lead to diabetes
- Trouble building muscle mass
- Low energy levels and fatigue
- Poor concentration and trouble learning
- Moodiness and mood swings
- Muscle, bone and joint pain
- Slow wound healing
- Low immunity



References

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