



NUTRITION NEWS

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Protein and Health Promotion

Protein intake is a key component to a healthy diet. But many of us aren't aware of what protein does, how much protein we really need, or what are good sources of protein. Proteins are made up of amino acids. Because the body doesn't store amino acids like it does fat, the body needs a daily supply of amino acids to continue to synthesize protein. Protein is used for building, repairing, and maintaining body tissues. The body's main structural components, including skin, bones, muscles, and organs, are largely made up of protein. Hormones and enzymes are also made up of protein. Lastly, proteins are used to make antibodies, which can help fight disease.



As we age, our protein needs actually increase slightly. For the average adult over the age of 65, a typical protein goal for daily intake is somewhere between 60 and 80 grams. Certain chronic conditions may require a protein restriction (such as those individuals who have kidney or liver problems), while other conditions actually require a higher daily protein intake (such as people on dialysis or those with skin breakdown such as non-healing wounds).

So what foods are considered good

protein sources? Generally, meat is what we first think of when we think of protein. Chicken, beef, pork, seafood, lamb, and even wild game are all excellent sources of protein. 1 ounce of any of the aforementioned foods generally contains about 7 grams of protein. If you are worried about the amount of saturated fats in these foods, remember that there are often lean varieties. For example, you can buy lean ground beef- some stores carry ground beef that is 93% lean- so that you can get adequate protein without overdoing your fat allowance for the day. Dairy products are also excellent sources of protein. And again, these items are available as low fat or even non-fat (or skim) options. Milk, yogurt, cheeses, and ice cream all contain good protein.

Beans and legumes can also be adequate sources of protein. Beans are generally not considered a complete protein (such as animal products or meat) but they can still contribute to your overall protein intake. Peanut butter is also an excellent source of protein. While it is high in fat, it can be used sparingly to complement your protein intake. Nuts in general are excellent sources of protein. Almonds,



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Monthly Exercise

Toe Taps

To strengthen the lower legs.

1. Sitting in a chair and keeping your heels on the floor, lift your toes high enough that you can feel the muscles along your shin working. (This helps keep blood circulating in your leg and also strengthens the lower leg.)
2. Repeat 20 times.

pistachios, cashews, and peanuts can all be incorporated into a healthy diet that will be rich in protein.



Perhaps the best source of protein is eggs. Egg intake was discouraged a number of years ago because eggs are high in cholesterol. However, eggs are the single most bioavailable source of protein that our bodies can utilize. It is now thought that three or less eggs weekly is considered “safe”, even if you have a higher than normal cholesterol level. And if you only eat the white of the egg (which while high in protein is low in cholesterol) there is almost no limit on your intake. Because of their versatility, eggs can easily be incorporated into a moderate diet. They can even be added to casseroles or mixed dishes when you are looking to add a few more calories or grams of protein into your diet because they are virtually undetectable.

While eggs are an excellent source of protein, there are additional health benefits to consuming eggs. The following list of reasons to include eggs in your regular diet was first published by Healthline.



1. Eggs are a super food and are loaded with nutrients. A single large egg contains vitamins A, B5, B12, B2, folate, phosphorous, and selenium. It is very nutrient dense as it contains only about 80 calories and 5 grams of fat.
2. Eggs are high in cholesterol, but they may not adversely affect your blood cholesterol. Not all of the cholesterol in our diet is immediately translated to a spike in blood cholesterol. Remember that the liver produces cholesterol every single day.
3. Eggs raise HDL (“good”) cholesterol. While exercise is the best way to increase your

HDLs, some studies show that eating eggs may also increase the “good” cholesterol in your body.

4. Eggs contain choline. Choline is generally grouped in with the B vitamins and is used to build cell membranes and contributes to brain function. Studies suggest that many people don’t eat enough choline daily. Whole eggs are a good source of this important nutrient.
5. Eggs contain lutein. As we age, our eyesight tends to get worse. Lutein is an antioxidant that promotes eye health. And whole eggs are rich in lutein. Remember that eggs also contain Vitamin A, another key nutrient in preserving vision.
6. Eggs are high in quality proteins. Eggs are a complete protein, meaning that the essential amino acids are all present.
7. Eggs are satisfying, which may help you eat fewer calories and ultimately lose weight. Because eggs are high in protein and moderate in fat, calories, and other nutrients, they promote a feeling of satiety, or fullness. When we are satisfied, we stop looking for empty calories to satisfy us.

Remember that much of the nutrition of an egg is found in the yolk. Most of the egg’s nutrients are in the yolk, and just over 40% of the protein is found in the yolk.

Here is a basic picture of the nutrition of one whole egg. The percentages indicate the percentage of the daily value of the listed nutrient.

Calories	70	
Total Fat	5 g	6%
Saturate Fat	1.5 g	8%
Trans Fat	0 g	
Cholesterol	185 mg	62%

Sodium	70 mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate	0 g	
Protein	6 g	12%
Total Sugars	0 g	

One of the key reasons to eat adequate protein is to maintain muscle tone and strength. And of course, another way to keep your muscles healthy is by regular exercise. With the weather soon to turn nice, adding exercise or varying your exercise routine can offer many health benefits.

Here are some key benefits to adding exercise, especially as we age.

- ♦ **Live Longer:** according to the World Health Organization, a sedentary lifestyle is one of the 10 leading causes of death and disability. Even gentle exercise, such as walking or swimming, can increase your lifespan by 3 to 5 years.
- ♦ **Prevent Falls:** improving muscle strength and bone density can be helpful in reducing the risk of falls. It can also improve your balance. The WHO says regular exercise can reduce the risk of a hip fracture by 40%!
- ♦ **Reduced risk of stroke or heart attack:** regular cardiovascular exercise (anything that raises your heart rate) will increase blood flow to your heart and boost your overall health.
- ♦ **Better bone density:** Weight bearing exercise can increase the strength of bones and reduce the risk of developing osteoporosis and fractures. According to the National Osteoporosis Society, one in two women and one in five men will break a bone due to osteoporosis.
- ♦ **Reduced risk of developing dementia:** being sedentary in later years can increase the risk of developing dementia.
- ♦ **Prevent or delay disease:** exercise is an effective remedy for many chronic conditions. Studies show that people with arthritis, heart disease,

or diabetes all benefit from regular activity. It can also help manage your cholesterol levels.

- ♦ **Promotes more confidence and independence:** a study that was conducted by the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society studied regular exercise in the elderly and found that training led to improvements in functional reach and balance. This in turn, promoted an increased confidence. And with a decreased risk of a fall, maintaining one's independence becomes easier.

Lastly, don't forget the benefits of regular exercise, no matter how old you are! According to the Mayo Clinic, the following list is applicable across the life span!

- * **Exercise controls weight**
- * **Exercise combats health conditions and diseases**
- * **Exercise improves mood**
- * **Exercise boosts energy**
- * **Exercise promotes better sleep**
- * **Exercise can be fun**



As a general goal, aim for 30 minutes daily of regular exercise. Be sure to check with your doctor to be sure that you are healthy enough for regular activity.

Exercise needn't be hard on the body to be effective. Even gentle exercises such as stretching and yoga can be beneficial. Arthritis is often treated through physical therapy to alleviate the symptoms. Exercise can actually relieve stiffness, reduce pain and fatigue, and improve muscle and bone strength. Including low impact aerobic activity, a range of motion exercise, and strength training for muscle tone.

Ham and Wild Rice Quiche



¾ cup water

¼ cup uncooked wild rice

1 (9 inch) unbaked pie crust

1 cup cooked cubed low sodium ham

1/3 cup finely chopped red bell pepper

¼ cup thinly sliced green onion tops

1 (4 ounce) can sliced mushrooms, drained

3 eggs, beaten

1 cup sour cream

1 tbs Dijon mustard 1/8 tsp black pepper

½ tsp salt 2 cups shredded Swiss cheese

In a small pot, bring the water and wild rice to a boil. Cover, reduce heat to low, and simmer 45 minutes.

Preheat oven to 425°. Bake the pie crust 10 minutes, or until golden brown. Reduce heat to 400°.

In a bowl, mix the cooked rice, ham, red bell pepper, green onion tops, and mushrooms. In a separate bowl, mix the eggs, sour cream, mustard, salt, and pepper.

Sprinkle the bottom of the pie crust with 1 cup Swiss cheese. Spread the rice, ham, and vegetable mixture

over the cheese, and cover with the egg mixture. Top with remaining Swiss cheese.

Bake 30 minutes in the preheated oven, or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Pair it with a salad for a complete meal!

Ham and Pear Salad



5 cups torn spinach

2 medium pears, chopped

8 ounces lean cooked ham

1/2 cup sliced carrot

1/4 sliced green onions

Pineapple Mint Vinaigrette

(combine 1/2 cup unsweetened pineapple juice, 2 tbs white vinegar, 2 tbs vegetable oil, and 1 tbs fresh mint or 1 tsp dried mint, crushed.)

Combine all ingredients and pour enough vinaigrette over the salad to moisten it. Toss lightly to coat. Garnish with fresh pineapple, mint, or mint sprigs.

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