



# THE PROTEIN PLAYBOOK

EAT MORE, STRESS LESS



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# INTRODUCTION

Protein is a critical nutrient for our bodies, and it is important to ensure that we are getting enough of it in our diets. Protein is necessary for building and repairing tissues, maintaining healthy muscles, and supporting immune function. Consuming protein at every meal is recommended to help meet our daily protein needs.

## WHY IS PROTEIN IMPORTANT?

Protein is an essential macronutrient that plays a crucial role in building and repairing tissues in our bodies. Protein is made up of amino acids, which are the building blocks of our muscles, bones, and other tissues.

It is important to consume enough protein in our diets to support our body's needs, and to consume protein from a variety of sources to ensure we get all of the essential amino acids we need.

[Essential in the nutrition world means that your body is not able to make these nutrients, they must come from food]

## **Here are some of the key benefits of consuming enough protein:**

1. Building and repairing tissues: Protein is necessary for building and repairing tissues in the body, including muscle, bone, and skin.
2. Maintaining healthy muscle mass: Protein is important for maintaining healthy muscle mass and preventing muscle loss as we age.
3. Supporting immune function: Protein is necessary for the production of antibodies, which help fight off infections and support immune function.
4. Providing energy: While protein is not a primary source of energy for the body, it can provide energy when carbohydrates and fats are not available.



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# PROTEIN FOR WEIGHT MAINTENANCE + FAT LOSS.

When we eat protein, it takes longer to digest than carbohydrates or fats. This means that protein stays in our stomachs for longer, which helps us feel full and satisfied. When we feel full, we are less likely to overeat or snack on unhealthy foods between meals. This can lead to a reduction in overall calorie intake, which can support weight loss efforts.

Additionally, protein can help support the growth and maintenance of lean muscle mass. Lean muscle mass is important for overall health, as well as for weight loss efforts. Muscle tissue burns more calories than fat tissue, even at rest, which means that individuals with higher muscle mass have a higher resting metabolic rate. This means that they burn more calories even when they are not exercising or engaging in physical activity.

Protein can also help prevent the loss of muscle mass that can occur during weight loss efforts. When we lose weight, our bodies often break down muscle tissue along with fat tissue. This can lead to a reduction in overall muscle mass, which can lower resting metabolic rate and make it harder to maintain weight loss over time. By consuming enough protein, we can help support the growth and maintenance of lean muscle mass, which can help prevent this loss of muscle tissue during weight loss efforts.



# PROTEIN AT EVERY MEAL.

Incorporating protein into meals and snacks can be a helpful strategy for supporting weight loss and weight maintenance efforts. Eating a high-protein breakfast, for example, has been shown to help reduce overall caloric intake throughout the day, as well as, reduce cravings and snacking between meals. Choosing snacks that are high in protein, such as hardboiled eggs or Greek yogurt, can also help reduce hunger and prevent overeating.

It's important to note, however, that not all sources of protein are created equal. Choosing high-quality sources of protein, such as lean meats, fish, poultry, eggs, or plant-based proteins like tofu, can help ensure that we are getting the most nutritional benefit from our protein intake.

**Consuming protein at every meal can have numerous benefits for our health, including:**

- **Improved muscle mass:** Consuming enough protein can help improve muscle mass and prevent muscle loss, especially as we age.
- **Better weight management:** Protein can help us feel fuller for longer, which can lead to reduced overall caloric intake and better weight management.
- **Improved immune function:** Protein is necessary for the production of antibodies, which can help improve immune function and reduce the risk of infections.
- **Better bone health:** Protein is essential for bone health and can help reduce the risk of osteoporosis.
- **Better blood sugar control:** Consuming protein with meals can help regulate blood sugar levels and reduce the risk of diabetes.



# HOW MUCH PROTEIN DO WE NEED?

While the recommended daily intake of protein is generally considered to be 0.8 grams per kilogram of body weight, this recommendation is actually based on the minimum amount of protein needed to prevent deficiency and maintain basic bodily functions. This level of protein intake is recommended for "survival", but it may not be enough to support optimal health and wellbeing.

Protein recommendations can vary depending on factors such as age, sex, activity level, and specific health conditions. It's important to note that these recommendations are general guidelines and individual needs may vary. Consult with Dietitian Sandra for personalized advice.

## **Here are some general daily protein intake recommendations\*:**

Protein Intake for a Healthy Adult (grams per kilogram of body weight per day):

- **Sedentary: 1.0-1.2 g/kg**
- **Active: 1.2-1.8 g/kg**
- **Athlete: 2.0+ g/kg** (specific recommendations based on individual)

Specific disease states such as, chronic kidney disease, liver diseases, recovery from surgery, etc. require varying amounts of protein.

Recommendations begin at 0.6 g/kg and continue above 2.0 g/kg. For such instances, it is crucial to consult her Dietitian Sandra and not guess your protein needs.

\*Please notes these are just recommendations for a healthy adult. These recommendations may not be appropriate for you. For personalized recommendations, please set up a consult with Dietitian Sandra.





# SOURCES OF PROTEIN:

**There are many sources of protein, including:**

- **Animal sources:** Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and dairy products
- **Plant sources:** Beans, lentils, tofu, nuts, seeds, and some grains (like quinoa) [Note: Integrating or consuming only plant-based protein sources is a bit less straightforward than animal sources.]
- **Protein supplements:** Protein supplements, such as whey protein powder or plant-based protein powders, can be a convenient way to increase protein intake.

It's important to choose sources of protein that are also low in processed ingredients.

## INCORPORATING PROTEIN INTO EVERY MEAL:

Incorporating protein into every meal can help us meet our daily protein needs and support our body's vital functions. Here are some examples for incorporating protein into every meal:

- **Breakfast:** Add eggs, yogurt, or protein powder into smoothies.
- **Lunch and Dinner:** Add grilled chicken, fish, filet mignon, or tofu.
- **Snacks:** Greek yogurt, protein shakes, charcuterie boards, eggs



# YOUR PLAN TO EAT SUFFICIENT PROTEIN:

1. What are your goals for incorporating protein in to your meals? (e.g., increase overall protein intake, ensure balanced macronutrient distribution, support muscle growth or maintenance)?
2. How much protein do you aim to consume per day? (consider recommended daily protein intake based on your specific needs and goals)?
3. What are your favorite and least favorite protein sources?
4. Are there recipes you would like to try this week? If yes, what are they?
5. What is the easiest way of incorporating enough protein in your day?
6. What challenges do you foresee in achieving this habit for the week?

**Your plan to eat sufficient protein::**





## Want this personalized?

If you want a clear plan (food structure + training + accountability) that fits your life, I can help you implement this without overwhelm.

## Choose your next step:

- 1:1 Nutrition Coaching – personalized plan + check-ins
- Gym Dietitian Program – structure + community + progress tracking
- Starter Session – one-time roadmap + next steps

Book your consult or DM me 'GOALS' on Instagram @dietitian.sandra!



Note: This guide is for education and does not replace medical advice. If you are pregnant, postpartum, or managing a medical condition, talk with your healthcare provider about what is appropriate for you.

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