

PROTEIN POWER

Proteins are made up of long strings of amino acids. Amino acids are essential building blocks for tissues and organs, neurotransmitters, hormones and digestive enzymes. There are 20 different amino acids that your body needs, but you can only manufacture 11 of them. The remaining 9 amino acids are called essential amino acids because you can't make them. Foods that have all 9 essential amino acids are called complete proteins.

SO HOW MUCH PROTEIN DO YOU NEED?

Protein requirements vary according to a number of factors. These include gender, lean muscle mass and activity levels.

I recommend 75-100 grams of protein a day, depending on how active you are. This can be split up between meals and snacks. A very simple guideline to follow is to have a serving of protein about the size and thickness of your palm at each meal. If you are reading a label, you should aim for 25-50 grams of protein (approximately 1-2 oz.) at each meal and 15 grams per snack (approx. ½ oz.).

EXAMPLE:

Breakfast – 1 egg (6 grams of protein in a large egg)

Lunch – 4 oz of wild salmon (approximately 7 grams of protein per ounce so this is 28 grams of protein)

Dinner - 4 oz of chicken or turkey breast (9.5 grams of protein per ounce, so this totals 38 grams of protein)

This is a total of 72 grams of protein.

Important: Many vegetables and grains have good amounts of protein so you don't necessarily need animal protein at each meal or even every day. This is purely based on your specific needs.

EXAMPLES:

1 cup of cooked spinach has 5 grams of protein

½ cup of quinoa has 4 grams of protein

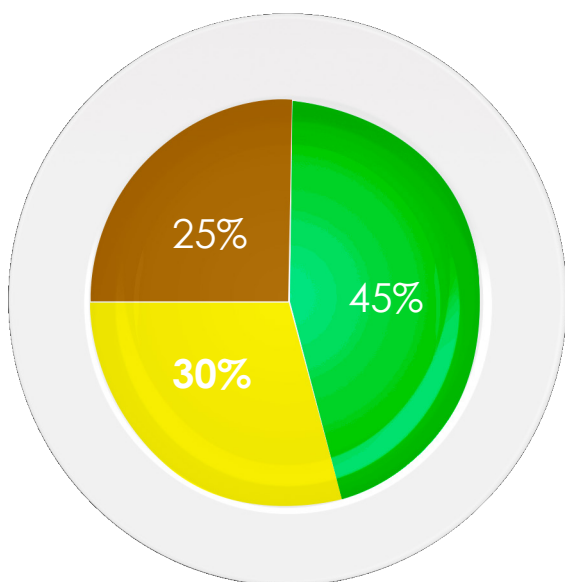
1 ounce of pumpkin seeds contains 5 grams of protein

½ cup of black beans contain 7.5 grams of protein

Good sources of animal protein are wild-caught fish, pastured chicken and turkey, pastured eggs, grass-fed red meat (buffalo, bison, lamb, beef).

Good sources of vegetarian protein are beans, quinoa, buckwheat, amaranth, hemp seeds, hemp protein powder, grain-based protein powders, fermented soy products (tempeh), spinach, walnuts, and nut butters.

This is a low-glycemic way of eating that is typically very effective for women struggling with hormonal imbalances. Your plate should look something like this:



45% Carbohydrates – this should consist mostly of leafy green vegetables and other nutrient dense/high fiber veggies. It can also include gluten-free whole grains. **IMPORTANT:** You may need less carbohydrates in your diet, some women do really well on 20% carbohydrates per meal.

30% Fat – this should consist of healthy fats. **IMPORTANT:** You may need more fat than this in your diet. Some women need up to 75% of their daily intake to be healthy fat.

25% Protein – this should consist of animal or vegetarian protein sources depending on your needs.