HEALTHY HANDOUT

SoyConnection

PUTTING SOY PROTEIN ON YOUR PLATE

By Matt Jacobs, MA, RD, LD, NSCA-CPT

Protein is vital to the human body to function and grow adequately. Protein can be found in both animal and plant foods as well as supplemental powders and bars. Prioritizing and incorporating a variety of protein sources on your plate can ensure adequate vitamin, mineral, and fiber intake.

The building blocks of proteins are called amino acids. Of the 20 amino acids used to synthesize protein, the body needs to obtain 9 of these from the foods we eat. These 9 are appropriately named essential amino acids.

The quality of a protein food is determined by its digestibility and amino acid content. Animal proteins are typically higher quality than plant proteins, although this is not the case with soy protein. The quality of soy protein is similar to that of animal proteins.[1] Soy products also offer lower saturated fat content than their animal counterparts.

Add soy proteins to your plate with these options:

Breakfast	soy yogurt, whole grain cereal with soymilk, prepared frozen soy breakfast sandwich, tofu, soy sausage scramble
Lunch	tofu hotdogs or burgers, soy nut butter sandwich, soups, stews, or salads with edamame, tempeh
Dinner	soy pasta with marinara, soy "meat" alternative retail products
Snack	edamame, soynuts, soy yogurt, shake made with soy milk, soy protein powder

The current protein Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for healthy adults is 0.8 g/kg body weight (bw)/day.[2] Special populations, such as athletes, may benefit from a protein intake above the current RDA, such as 1.2 to 2.0 g/kg bw/day.[3] Similarly, healthy aging adults may benefit from protein intake between 1.3 and 2.0 g/kg to prevent sarcopenia.[4] For example, a 170-pound adult would need to consume 62 g of protein per day at 0.8 g/kg, and 93 g at 1.2 g/kg.

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References

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