

LONG ISLAND WEIGHT COUNSELING, INC.



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Protein Power

by Linda Fiveson

What is really protein? Is protein, such as lean beef, pork, veal, skinless poultry and seafood the most beneficial protein source or are there other kinds of protein just as good? Is there equal value in the protein present in dairy products? What foods or mutations of foods have been added to this confusing question now? We hear of new variations of what protein is all of the time!

Soy products such as Tofu are considered protein but beware of the high calorie protein bars, chips and other "Soy" products being disguised as protein-food supplements! They are conveniently labeled "energy" bars and have a lot of calories, most from saturated fat! It should be no surprise that these items have nothing to do with energy! In addition, soy can increase the production of estrogen which in turn, increases the risk of estrogen-fed breast cancer receptors.

I have always believed that you should be able to identify the ingredients in a food from its label. If it's processed and being sold as a "quick source of protein, 'BUYER BEWARE!'" or "CONSUMER DON'T CONSUME!"

In today's times we hear mixed reports about what foods are believed to promote healthy weight loss and maintenance. We often think that less is better but this doesn't hold true in the case of reducing our protein intake. Our bodies use the protein we eat to maintain our muscles, bones, blood and organs and also, protect us from illness and disease. If we don't eat enough protein it can cause other problems. It can impair bone growth and health, muscle strength, muscle mass and our overall wellbeing. Furthermore, it can compromise our immune systems strength and function.

Our bodies rely on the nutrition, exercise and physical maintenance we provide for them to function. Eating healthy protein helps the digestive juices in our stomachs and intestines work efficiently. They break down the protein in food into amino acids which are the building blocks of protein.

There are 22 amino acids which are important to human health. Our bodies can make 13 of them automatically, with no

help from us. They can't make the other nine but we can get them from eating foods rich in protein. This proves how important it is to make wise and informed choices about what we eat.

When you think about it, wasteful food, is exactly that – **WASTEFUL!**

Since waste doesn't nourish us it goes into the wastebasket (otherwise known as *fat cells*) or it's excreted from our bodies. This gives us something to think about when we are making decisions about what to eat!

There are so many different diets and weight loss programs advertised today that people are truly confused. As a result we "mix and match", taking what we think is the best part of each. Ultimately, we cut back on many nutritional foods and don't achieve what we set out to do.

LESS PROTEIN IS NOT BETTER FOR WEIGHT LOSS. When we lose weight, we don't only lose fat. Unfortunately, we lose muscle as well. The human body is a parasite and a host so it feeds from itself when it needs to. It doesn't always go just to fat cells; it takes from the muscle too. Eating "enough" protein can help maintain our strength and muscles. A higher muscle mass will also boost our metabolisms and make losing weight easier. Research says that as we get older we lose bone mass. We want to keep our bones strong and dense to avoid the aging bone diseases such as osteoporosis, humped backs, brittle, broken and fractured bones. Eating protein helps do this!

HOW MUCH PROTEIN IS ENOUGH?

I recommend three servings a day. You can also break this down into five small meals (rather than three large ones) to help our digestive systems work more efficiently. Think of protein like a time-released vitamin. The body will use it as needed if it's available. It's better to have more than less because it keeps our metabolisms working. Although any nutrients in excess (protein, carbohydrates or fat) have the potential to cause weight gain, protein is the **LEAST** likely because it is a "structural" nutrient. Nutrients that are "fuel for energy" must be used just as that... "fuel". If you don't utilize them in that way they are stored...as fat! Conversely, not enough protein causes our bodies to slow down...

Remember that protein slows the movement of food from the stomach to the intestines and makes us feel full for longer periods of time. If we are less hungry, we eat less. Protein also helps steady our blood sugar which decreases hunger too. Additionally, our bodies use a lot of energy to digest protein which assists in weight loss. All of these facts combined argue the validity of eating protein. Just think about where you get it from and eat **ENOUGH!**



Linda Says...

"If you bite it,
you
should write it!"



(KEEP A FOOD JOURNAL!)

VEGETABLE SATAY



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups cauliflower florets
- 2 cups broccoli florets
- 1 T reduced sodium soy sauce
- 1 T toasted sesame oil
- 1 T rice vinegar
- 1 T creamy peanut butter (Natural)
- 1 T minced ginger (fresh)
- 1 T minced garlic clove
- 1 t Madras curry powder
- 1 t salt (if desired)

DIRECTIONS

Blanch vegetables until they are tender but still crispy. Rinse under cool water and drain well. In a separate dish, blend together remaining ingredients. Put vegetables into mixture and stir gently to coat them. Leave them at room temperature for a minimum of two hours and eat or cover and refrigerate. You can substitute or add other vegetables and you can also put them onto skewers and drizzle with remaining sauce.



Trivia Corner

Do you know as much as you think you know? Check answers below!

- Over the last 20 years, what are American kids consuming less of?
a) Milk b) Fast Food c) Soft drinks
- What's the fattest part of poultry?
a) The leg and thigh meat b) The breast meat c) The skin
- What organ converts your food to fat?
a) Stomach b) Pancreas c) Liver
- Which has 6 times the Vitamin C and 8 times the beta-carotene of iceberg lettuce?
a) Romaine b) Apples c) Celery
- Which has the most cholesterol?
a) Steamed shrimp b) Roasted chicken c) Refined sugar
- What is the desirable percent of body fat for normally active women?
a) 26-31 % b) 19-24 % c) 14-18 %



"The human mind treats a new idea the way the body treats a strange PROTEIN; it rejects it."
Peter B. Medawar

"Let GOOD PROTEINS become your friends!"

Blue and Purple Foods for Better Health



Purple traditionally symbolizes royalty; blue, trust. But in such foods as blueberries, plums, purple cabbage, black currants, eggplant and purple grapes, these hues represent a vision of good health. An analysis of the latest data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Study (NHANES), a survey of eating and health habits, found that adults who eat purple and blue fruits and vegetables have reduced risk for both high blood pressure and low HDL cholesterol (the "good" kind); they are also less likely to be overweight.

Scientists believe that anthocyanins, compounds that give purple foods their color, are responsible for these boons. These compounds mop up free radicals and soothe inflammation. Currently, purple and blue foods make up only 3 percent of the average American's fruit and vegetable intake, so aim to eat more.

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NUTRITION Month!

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Do you have a question or suggestion?
A personal strategy that you use?
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You may send an email to:

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ANSWERS TO TRIVIA
1) a 2) c 3) c 4) a 5) b 6) c