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Protein – Its Place In Your Weight Loss Program

By Kay Blackiston

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Any food that we take into our bodies is composed of macronutrients, micronutrients and water. The macronutrients (macro = large) are protein, fat and carbohydrates; the micronutrients (micro = small) are vitamins, minerals and trace elements. Macronutrients provide the calories that provide energy for life; micronutrients have no calories but are an essential part of our diet. Without macronutrients we would starve to death, without micronutrients we would die from health deterioration.

So, what exactly is protein?

Technically speaking proteins are any of a large group of nitrogenous (containing nitrogen) compounds of high molecular weight that are essential constituents of all living organisms. They consist of 22 biological compounds called amino acids. They provide the building materials for the basic cell structure of the heart, brain, blood, nails, hair, internal organs and skin - in fact for every living cell in our body. You would recognise proteins better if they were defined as red meat, fish, poultry, dairy products, eggs and soy.

To understand the importance of protein as an aid for weight loss we also have to briefly define what carbohydrates and fats are: carbohydrates are basically sugars, usually referred to as either simple or complex. Simple or refined carbohydrates are the ones like sugar, honey, cakes, biscuits and white bread. Complex carbohydrates are whole grain breads and cereals, brown rice, some vegetables, beans and legumes, and certain fruits. Fats are technically triglycerides and are usually divided into two groups; saturated and non-saturated. Saturated fats are usually solid at room temperature and include fats found in meat, dairy products, ice cream, milk and tropical oils. Unsaturated fats are usually liquid at room temperature and come in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated forms. Monounsaturated include oils from some nuts, olives and avocados. Polyunsaturated include oils from soybean, flax, sunflower, safflower as well as those fats that have been chemically transformed to make them solid like margarine. But the most important thing to consider is what effect do proteins, carbohydrates and fats have on your body? Or more specifically what effect do they have on the

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production of insulin in your body. Insulin is essential to life, some of its many functions are to control the storage of fat, control appetite, regulate the retention of water in the kidneys and the synthesis of cholesterol in the liver and it also acts as a growth hormone.

Eating fat has little effect on your insulin levels, and it actually decreases your appetite. Also eating the right kind of fats can rebalance hormones and improve the way you look and feel.

When you eat carbohydrates your body produces digestive enzymes that break down the chemical bonds between the sugar molecules. These molecules stimulate the production of metabolic hormones including insulin and this is where the problems can start. If we have a diet too high in carbohydrates, particularly refined carbohydrates, the high levels of glucose cause high levels of insulin to be produced. This can cause insulin resistance, where the body's cells become non-responsive to the insulin so the pancreas keeps producing more and more. It also means the body fails to burn the glucose as energy and instead it is stored as fat! If this happens constantly the build up of glucose in

the blood can cause Type II diabetes. The high level of insulin also tells a gland in the brain, the hypothalamus, to send out hunger signals. So you could have just eaten a meal and you would still feel hungry, there will be nothing that satisfies that hunger.

Eating protein produces a moderate amount of insulin but also produces the hormone glucagon. This hormone stimulates the body to get rid of fat by burning it for energy; it also decreases the body's production of cholesterol and stimulates the kidney to release excess salt and fluid. It also maintains your blood sugar level counteracting the effect of insulin, which lowers the blood sugar levels.

So, what should we be eating? Recent studies recommend 100g of protein for women and 150g of protein for men. An excellent way of getting the majority of your protein intake is by using a meal replacement product with extra protein powder if necessary. This takes all the guess work out of two thirds of your protein intake and when combined with a third meal of low fat protein (e.g. chicken or turkey) and low glycaemic vegetables gives the ideal diet to lose weight, gain energy, lower cholesterol and blood pressure and possibly reverse Type II diabetes.

Kay Blackiston has had an interest in health and nutrition for several years. She is now a personal weight loss coach supporting anybody who wishes to take charge of their lives and lose their excess weight.

Protein Supplement

By Rolf Rasmusson

Protein Supplement by Rolf Rasmusson

Protein Supplement - why protein.

Why is protein supplement important? Protein has many benefits and if you body doesn't get enough

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protein from other sources like food, protein supplement is a great substitute. And there are so many quality proteins available in the current market that you can be sure that you will find the protein supplement that is right for you specific needs, whether you will use it for bodybuilding or fitness program. You can pick the right protein supplement by taking both the ingredients and the cost into consideration.

Protein Supplement - protein benefits.

By using protein supplement you can enjoy the many benefit of protein. One of the most important benefits of protein is a muscle–building benefit. Protein provides the building blocks for muscle development. For example a whey–based protein powders are very important elements of any fundamental bodybuilding or fitness nutrition program.

Protein Supplement - soy, whey, or egg protein supplements.

Soy, whey, or egg protein supplements are examples of protein supplements available in the current market. Soy, whey, or egg is a reference to a protein supplement source. This source has been concentrated through high heat drying, acid extraction, or filtration. After the concentration process there is usually 60 – 70 percent protein by dry weight. But when the protein is concentrated other things like lactose and fat are also concentrated with it.

Protein Supplement - use carefully.

Protein supplement can be used for various purposes, but always consult a doctor if a specific protein is right for you. When a specific diet is combined with the use of protein supplement, the value can be much greater and results better. Good exercising program can help too.

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