



A Brief Study about Proteins: Organic Molecules in Biological Systems

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

In addition to becoming increasingly common as the population becomes older, nutritional therapies that promote health and independence later in life are becoming more significant as a consequence. When people age, their physical size and strength may be maintained, which may contribute in the fulfilment of this goal to a certain degree, but not completely. Following the findings of new research, people may benefit from increasing the frequency with which they eat protein in their diet. According to the results, existing protein intake guidelines may be insufficient to help people in attaining their goals in this area. It is vital to identify alternate, more ecologically friendly sources of protein to replace animal protein since animal protein production has a detrimental impact on the environment. The impact of plant-based protein-rich diets, which should be followed by individuals at risk of malnutrition, on appetite in older persons is still up in the air at this point. But according to the findings of the study, they do. Protein is an excellent source of energy since it has been shown in tests to be more satiating than other equivalent macronutrients. It is also a good source of protein. According to the researchers, they are investigating the protein needs of an ageing population [those over the age of 40], as well as sustainable protein sources, the appetite-related implications of a plant-based diet, and future research aims. The findings will be published in the journal Nutrition soon after they are made public, according to the publication schedule.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Protein is commonly thought of as a mass noun: a homogenous material that should be present in a specific proportion in your diet [1]. However, if you ever work in a molecular biology lab, protein may take on a new meaning for you [2]. Muscles start to age at a particular period in life, which is debatable. Between the age of 45 and 80, muscle mass starts to decline, with a 35–50 percent loss reported [3]. Muscular mass and strength are inversely related, and muscle strength declines rapidly after the age of 50. As a result, the start of the 4th decade of life may be seen as commencement of the muscular ageing process, and as such, it is the right time to make suitable diet modifications to avoid or postpone the formation of sarcopenia [4]. As a result, everyone above the age of 40 will be referred to as a "ageing adult" throughout this study.

Proteins are among the most numerous organic molecules in biological systems, and their structure and function are far more diversified than that of other macromolecule groups. Thousands of proteins, each with its own function, may be found in a single cell. All proteins are made from one or more chains of amino acids, despite the fact that their shapes and activities differ substantially. In this post, we'll look at the building blocks, structures, and functions of proteins in greater depth [5].

Plant-based nutrition has garnered a lot of attention in the previous decade. The desire for naturally growing high-protein meals has prompted a debate about whether more sources that are sustainable should be pushed. The increased use of animal protein in wealthier countries causes both healthcare and environmental issues [6]. For starters, a high animal protein diet has been associated to an high chance of surviving from obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease mortality, and a harmful variety of cancers [7]. However, it is important to note that dietary patterns pertain to the total diet, and it cannot be assumed that all animal-based patterns [meat, fish, eggs, and dairy] have the same detrimental influence on health. Second, animal protein production and transportation demand enormous amounts of dedicated land, water, nitrogen, and fossil energy. As a result, massive amounts of greenhouse gases [GHG] are emitted into the atmosphere [8]. Plant-proteins [considered for a more sustainable

source option] are yet to be properly explored for sarcopenia prophylaxis [9].

Additionally, little research has been done on the effects of plant proteins on muscle protein synthesis [MPS] in the context of hunger, which is a significant risk factor for malnutrition and muscle tissue loss [10]. Plant proteins have not yet been proved to have an effect on appetite-related responses in people of all ages, regardless of their weight [11]. Nutritional treatments for the elderly face a knowledge vacuum, which must be filled in order to evaluate if increasing protein consumption lowers caloric intake over time, increasing the risk of malnutrition [12]. Consumers might benefit from this kind of information by making better dietary choices, and the development of nutritionally balanced goods to promote healthy ageing in general could be affected [13].

Proteins are only present for a brief time after they are generated before being degraded and recycled by the cell's machinery [14]. A protein's half-life, which can vary substantially, is used to determine its longevity. They can exist for minutes or years in mammalian cells, with a typical lifespan of 1–2 days. Abnormal or misfolded proteins breakdown more quickly, either because they are targeted for destruction or because they are unstable [15].

2. APPROPRIATE PROTEIN CONSUMPTION

2.1 Amount of Food Consumed on a Daily Basis

0.8 gm of protein per kg of body weight [bw] is the current global Referred as Dietary Allowance [RDA] for protein, regardless of the age. The RNI [Reference Nutrient Intake] in the United Kingdom is 0.75 g/kg/bw [16]. In order to preserve nitrogen balance, these recommendations are based on the bare minimum and are not modified for physical activity levels [PAL]. As a consequence, those with a low PAL need more protein to maintain muscle mass than those who are more physically active [17]. When assessing protein demands, it is vital to keep in mind that physical activity declines with age. Many physiological changes occur as adults age, including anabolic resistance and insulin resistance [18]. These physiological changes all affect protein use and

hence protein needs. The validity of current protein guidelines has also been questioned because of methodological flaws. Due to unexplained nitrogen intake and exit pathways, the nitrogen-balance approach utilised in the majority of pooled research may be invalid [19]. Nitrogen balance testing must be carried out in a clinical environment, hence the protein demand evaluation can only be carried out for a limited period of time. Protein requirements assessments for older adults using innovative, more reliable assessment methodologies are rare and considered a priority for academic research [20].

In order to maintain a calorie intake of 2,000 per day, the FDA recommends that individuals ingest 50 grams of protein each day. If you eat more or less than the recommended daily allowance, your DV may be greater or lower [21].

A person's protein requirements are influenced by a variety of variables, including their degree of physical activity, body mass index, height, and whether or not they are pregnant.

The recommended daily allowance [RDA] is the quantity of a nutrient you should take each day in order to fulfil your body's minimum nutrient requirements. It's more like the bare minimum you'll need to be healthy than the specific daily calorie intake you should aim for [22].

One further thing to keep in mind is the quantity of amino acids that are accessible and the digestibility of particular amino acids in various protein meals.

Individuals may use a USDA calculator to determine their protein and nutritional requirements.

2.2 Daily Distribution

In addition to overall daily protein intake, studies have demonstrated that the protein composition and frequency of daily meals have a role in maintaining muscle mass and function. In order to maximise 24-hour muscle protein synthesis [MPS], it is recommended that healthy individuals have two to three meals per day, each providing 25–30 grammes of high-quality protein. As long as you're in good health, you should be able to take this amount [23].

Unexpectedly, a "more is better" mentality isn't always the best. Moore and his colleagues

studied how the per-meal threshold varied as a person grew older and heavier [24]. Young men [22 years] and senior men [71 years] had protein utilisation plateaus of 0.24 and 0.40 g/kg/bw, respectively, in this research. Both young [35-year-olds] and elderly [aged 68-2 years] participants in a study by Symons and colleagues showed no significant advantage to increasing protein consumption from 30 to 90 grammes each meal [25]. The projected per-meal threshold after eating a plant-protein-rich meal is uncertain, particularly in elderly adults [24].

3. DIETARY PROTEIN SOURCES

3.1 India's Protein Consumption

Protein underconsumption in Indian families may be traced back to a variety of variables. The Protein Paradox Study, conducted by Right to Protein, examined over 2142 mothers in 16 cities to learn why protein is often overlooked in Indian households. One finding was that there is a lot of misconceptions about protein and its consumption [26]. Nearly 95% of Indian moms are aware of protein as a macronutrient, yet just 3% fully comprehend its importance and why it should be consumed!

A common misconception is that a simple dinner of dal, roti, and rice is sufficient to fulfil daily protein requirements. Plant-based and animal-based diets with high protein content were also unidentified. This is a reason for worry, particularly in India, where the bulk of the population follows a vegetarian or flexitarian diet [casual vegetarianism], and even plant-based protein sources go unreported [27].

3.2 Quality of Protein

According to a 2017 poll, 73 percent of Indians are protein deficient, and more than 90% are uninformed of their daily protein requirements. A recent investigation of protein perception, understanding, and intake in 16 Indian cities discovered a knowledge gap in the use of high-quality protein in regular meals. Protein consumption is shrouded in misconceptions, with 85 percent of people believing it causes weight gain.

The statistics show that the source of protein [or the "package" of protein] is more significant for human health than the quantity of protein itself. For each condition, a study may be found below,

but here's the evidence-based conclusion: Consuming nutritious protein sources like beans, almonds, fish, or chicken instead of red meat and processed meat may minimise the risk of a variety of diseases and early death[28].

Protein intake is increasing globally, with an average of 68 grammes per person per day. In comparison to other Asian countries and developed countries, India has the lowest average protein consumption [47 grammes per person per day].

3.3 Protein from Plants

A meal's nutritional content may be boosted by using plant proteins as a nutritional enhancer or as fats or animal protein alternatives [28]. As an example, SPI, for example, may lower the fat, milk sugar, and calorie content of food. Plant proteins may be utilised as fillers or fat stabilisers in meat products like surimi, meat batter, and pig meat gels because of the cross-linking between plant proteins and myoglobin [29]. Ultrasonic and ultrasonic therapy may enhance the quality of food by using MTGases-modified plant proteins [30].

It's important to note, however, that excessive plant protein levels may deteriorate food texture while SPI in high concentrations can harm food flavour. As a result, a wide range of delicious food items may be combined with SPI to increase the nutritional and sensory aspects of the finished goods. In SMP, for example, sugar and protein cooperate to make wheat porridge taste better [Sai Manohar et al., 2011].

Recent years have seen a lot of attention paid to the long-term impact of plant proteins on health and disease. Sections on cardiovascular health, metabolic syndrome, diabetes, cancer and renal function, lean body mass and strength as well as overall morbidity and mortality are covered in this portion of the book. Plant protein's health effects aren't going to be covered in detail in this section. Among its aims is to highlight relevant current studies and meta-analyses, in addition to starting a conversation about future research subjects [31].

3.4 The Most Beneficial Protein Sources

The fact that eggs are a great source of protein is universally acknowledged. It is high in nutrients and is ideal for today's diet. Furthermore, it is inexpensive, flavorful, and simple to prepare. Eggs are the first and most vital source of protein

for anyone wanting to reduce weight. A cooked egg has around 6 grammes of protein, including the yolk. What if you're a vegetarian or don't like for eggs? Do not be discouraged; while eggs are high in protein, there are other foods on the market that contain more protein than one egg [32]. Soybeans are abundant in vitamin C, protein, and folate while being low in saturated fat. Calcium, fibre, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, and potassium are all abundant in them. 1 serving of cooked soybeans has 28 grammes of protein. Plain Greek yoghurt is nutrient-dense and has a long list of health advantages. It's a great snack that keeps you satisfied for a longer amount of time. Protein content varies from 12 to 17.3 grammes per serving of fat-free Greek yoghurt [33].

3.5 Protein Casein

Casein is known for about 80% of the total protein found in the cow's milk, with whey accounting for the remaining 20%. The liquid element of milk is whey, while the curds are casein.

Consider cottage cheese: the liquid that has gathered on top is whey that has separated from the hard casein-containing curds beneath. Another time when the whey-containing liquid separates from the solid yoghurt is when the yoghurt is freshly opened or unmixed.

Skim milk is used to make casein protein. The whey is first drained out. After that, the leftover milk curds are rinsed, drained, dried, and pulverised into a powder.

Micellar casein is the most popular casein protein supplement on the market, with an average protein content of 80–82 percent by weight [34].

3.6 Importance of Protein in Daily Human Life

The building blocks of life are proteins. Every cell in the human body has protein. An amino acid sequence forms the building blocks for protein. In order for your body to repair and replace cells, it needs protein in your diet. Protein is also essential for the growth and development of children, adolescents, and pregnant women. The building blocks of life are proteins. In the human body, every cell is made of protein. Amino acids are the building blocks of protein. Your body's cells need protein to repair and replenish, therefore you need to eat enough of it.

The Atkins Diet and the Ketogenic Diet, for example, advocate for a high protein and fat consumption while reducing carbs. However, studies show that they seem to work best in the short term. One reason for this might be because people are unable to sustain such a diet for a lengthy period of time. Muscle wasting can be induced by a protein deficiency either from a lack of protein in the diet or metabolic issues. Protein deficiency is the most common cause of Kwashiorkor and Marasmus [35-41].

Kwashiorkor is a protein deficiency condition that causes edoema and swelling of the liver. There are also fatty infiltrations. The condition is caused by a protein shortage induced by a lack of protein in the diet. It is mostly induced by starvation. This condition causes edoema in the youngster, resulting in swollen feet and ankles. The youngster will have a bloated belly, a fatty liver, thinning hair, eczema, and tooth loss [35-36]. These youngsters would suffer from anorexia, a condition in which they lose their appetite and become irritable. Marasmus is a dietary problem in which the amount of protein consumed exceeds the amount consumed. It can affect both adults and children, unlike kwashiorkor. This condition affects people who eat a low-protein diet and suffer from malabsorption syndrome, which causes improper nutrition absorption. Individuals with a low BMI will be selected. Growth is slowed as a result of this. The skin begins to fold and the bones become more exposed. Individuals will be immunocompromised as well. Individuals may also get infections quickly and experience diarrhoea. One needs to be cautious with the diets [37,38]. Concentrating just on protein and fat might prevent you from obtaining all of the nutrients you require, resulting in negative side effects. Fatigue, dizziness, headaches, poor breath, and constipation are all possible side effects.

Here are five convincing reasons to get adequate protein on a daily basis:

1. Bones, muscles, cartilage, and skin all require protein to function properly. The bulk of your hair and nails are made up of protein.
2. Make any necessary repairs. It aids in the growth and repair of tissue in your body.
3. Double-check if you're getting adequate oxygen. Red blood cells include a protein molecule that carries oxygen throughout the body. This improves the flow of nutrients throughout your body.

4. Take everything in. About half of the protein you consume each day is needed to create enzymes that aid digestion, as well as new cells and molecules in your body.
5. Remain in command. Protein is essential for hormone regulation, especially during cell transformation and puberty development.

Eating a high-protein diet has various fitness advantages, including:

- Enhancing the pace of recovery after exercise and/or injury
- Muscle loss is lessened.
- Growth of muscle mass
- aiding in maintaining a healthy weight
- Getting rid of hunger

4. CONCLUSION

Everyone should have protein in their diet. For every 20 pounds of body weight, the typical person needs 7 grammes of protein per day. A wide range of foods provide protein, therefore most individuals should be able to reach this objective easily. Protein "packages" may not all be equal. It's crucial to keep in mind that meals include much more than just protein. People are encouraged to consume more protein-rich meals through the Healthy Eating Plate. Unfortunately, the creation of ecologically friendly and nutrient-dense food alternatives is still in its infancy, and more evidence is required to back them up. Even very little research has been done on the impact of plant proteins on hunger, data demonstrates that substituting plant-derived protein for animal protein has favourable benefits on both normal weight and overweight/obese people. More research is required to determine the effects of various protein sources on satiety in underweight persons.

CONSENT

It is not applicable.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

It is not applicable.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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