



How much protein can one consume in a day?

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Protein is a crucial part of a healthy diet. It plays a major role in building and repairing muscle, bones, and organs. Some of the popular high-protein diets have been shown to help reduce fat, lose weight, and build or retain muscle. Hence, protein has been in the spotlight for many years since the raise of these fashionable diets.

How much protein is to be taken in a day

Yes, protein is a vital macronutrient without which your body cannot build function. But out of the total calories you take per day, the recommended distribution of carbohydrates, protein, and fat is

- Carbohydrates – 45 – 65%
- Protein – 15 – 35 %
- Fat – 10- 35%

***NOTE** – The right percentage varies depending on the age, gender, type of physical activity you do.

Also, NO one dress fits all – similarly, the protein requirement for every individual is unique. This again depends on the above-mentioned factors and even the height, weight, and goal of the individual (weight loss/weight gain/body building).

For the average adult, the protein requirement is 0.8 – 1 gm per kg body weight. For example, for a 60 kg man with moderate physical activity, the requirement would be 48 – 60 gm protein per day.

The requirement may also go up to 1.8 gm /kg body weight or more (in some cases up to 3 gm /kg body weight) if an individual is involved in rigorous fitness or sports regimen.

How much protein you can eat at one time?

This is very important to understand and follow, to get the maximum benefit out of the protein

you consume.

There is an upper limit to how much protein the body can use for muscle synthesis at a given time. Studies suggest that 20 – 30 gm of protein is the maximum quantity that should be aimed at one meal. Beyond which the protein that is taken will be used for energy.

The precise amount of protein that is needed will vary from person to person. For an individual who is with a very large or muscular body, or involved in heavy workouts, the upper limit may be a little more than someone who is smaller or not involved in workouts. But, in general, for building muscles, you should be spreading your protein intake out among all of your meals rather than eating the entire day's allowance at one meal.

Protein rich diet sources

Some of the protein-rich sources include:

- Egg
- Lean meats and fish
- Dairy
- Legumes and Pulses
- Whole grains
- Nuts

When should you eat protein?

In general, protein should be in every meal you eat. According to the healthy plate concept, you should divide your plate as Half-Quarter-Quarter. In which half is the produces like vegetables, Green leaves, the quarter is from a variety of grains, and the other quarter for protein from different sources like legumes, fish, egg, lean meats, nuts.

For fitness enthusiasts, if consuming protein concentrates /isolates like whey protein, soy protein, etc., the best to consume it is 15 – 60 mins post their workout/training session. This is because the body will be in its best capacity to absorb protein at that period known as "Anabolic window". Apart from this, in some cases, protein powders are taken at bedtime to enhance recovery.

What happens when you eat less?

Unlike fat and glucose, our body has little capacity to store protein. When you lack protein in your diet, especially for a long time, it can cause you to be protein deficient and potentially lead to adverse effects.

Muscle Wasting - Insufficient protein in your diet reduces lean body mass, muscle strength, and function as your body would start to break down muscle and use it as energy to support other vital body functions when protein is low. It can also cause muscle weakness, soreness, and cramping.

Poor Wound Healing - Wound healing needs good nutrition, including protein. Protein deficiency contributes to delayed wound healing.

Infections - Your immune system needs adequate protein intake to function at its best. The impaired immune system is also an indicator of protein deficiency. The risk of falling sick and the ability to fight off infection is decreased without a healthy immune system.

What happens when you eat more?

You might probably be familiar with many popular high-protein diets. Although there are benefits of these high protein diets, like weight loss, fat loss, and increased lean mass, these diets are also associated with several risks that you have to be aware of.

Nutritional experts do not advise regular consumption of protein exceeding the recommended daily amount. Although High-protein diets may result in weight loss, this type of weight loss may only last for the short term.

If you remember the saying "Anything in excess is not good", it applies to diet and protein in it as well. The excess amount of protein taken is also stored as fat, similar to taking the excess amounts of carbohydrates. Unlike carbohydrates, protein releases a surplus of amino acids in your body. This can also contribute to weight gain over a period of time, especially because you consume high calories while trying to increase your protein intake.

High-protein diets that restrict carbohydrates are also typically low in dietary fiber and hence may disturb your bowel movement resulting in constipation.

The major disturbance could be the high load on kidneys; This is because the proteins are broken down to amino acids upon digestion. If taken in excess, your kidneys have to work harder to get rid of the extra nitrogen (from amino acids) and waste products of protein metabolism.

Source <https://data.vikaspedia.in/short/lc?k=evAEK7Pxiqs9OCPYOBvSMQ>

