

Protein mania: the rich world's new diet *obsession*

Are you getting enough protein? The question provides its own answer: if you are worrying about the amount of protein in your diet, then you are almost certainly eating more than enough.

obsession 痴迷; 困扰

elixir 万能药

You merely need to visit a western supermarket today to see that many people regard protein as some kind of universal *elixir* – one food companies are profitably adding to anything they can. “When the Box Says ‘Protein’, Shoppers Say ‘I’ll take it’” was the headline of a 2013 article in the Wall Street Journal.

The intensity of our protein obsession can only be understood as part of a wider series of diet battles that go back half a century. If we now thirst for protein as if it were water, it may be because the other two macronutrients – fats and *carbohydrates* – have each in turn been made to seem toxic in the public mind.

carbohydrates 碳水化合物

carbs 碳水化合物

In the current nutrition wars, protein has emerged as the last macronutrient left standing. David L Katz, an American doctor and public health scholar who is the director of the Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center said: “First they told us to cut fat. But instead of wholegrains and lentils, we ate low-fat junk food.” Then food marketers heard the message about cutting *carbs* and sold us protein-enriched junk foods instead.

For decades now, there has been a tendency to think about what we eat and drink in terms of nutrients, rather than real whole ingredients in all their complexity. A combination of diet *fads* and clever marketing has got us here. It doesn’t matter whether we fixate on “low fat” or “low carbs” or “high protein” – we are making the same old mistakes about nutrition in a new form.

fad 时尚