



PORK

A NATURAL SOURCE OF PROTEIN

The POWER OF PROTEIN

Protein is vital to every cell in the body. Protein repairs body tissues, builds enzymes, hormones and muscles, supports the immune system, regulates chemical reactions in the body, helps form blood cells and provides energy.

Pork has all the essential amino acids or ‘building blocks’ needed for optimal health.

When compared to pork, most plant proteins are not as well digested and/or have limited amounts of one or more of the essential amino acids.ⁱ Legumes, however, contain fibre and complex carbohydrates, making them a great alternative to rice and pasta to create a balanced meal.

How much is ENOUGH?

Protein should provide 10 to 35% of total daily calories a day for adults.ⁱⁱ A recent Health Canada survey found adults are at the lower end of the acceptable range – 17% of calories.ⁱⁱⁱ

Since protein is needed to build and maintain muscles, the amount of protein an adult needs is determined by their weight.^{iv} The current recommendation is 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight.

However, experts suggest adults may need more protein than this recommendation. Studies suggest 1.0 – 1.2 grams protein per kilogram body weight is ideal to stimulate muscle growth. Even greater benefits may be seen with higher protein intakes and when combined with physical activity.^v

Optimizing MUSCLE GROWTH

Protein quality, the amount consumed per meal and timing of consumption can stimulate muscle development.

Estimates are that 25 to 30 grams of high-quality protein foods at breakfast, lunch and dinner gives adults the best chance to maintain or improve muscle mass. This can be maximized by ensuring regular physical activity.^{vii}

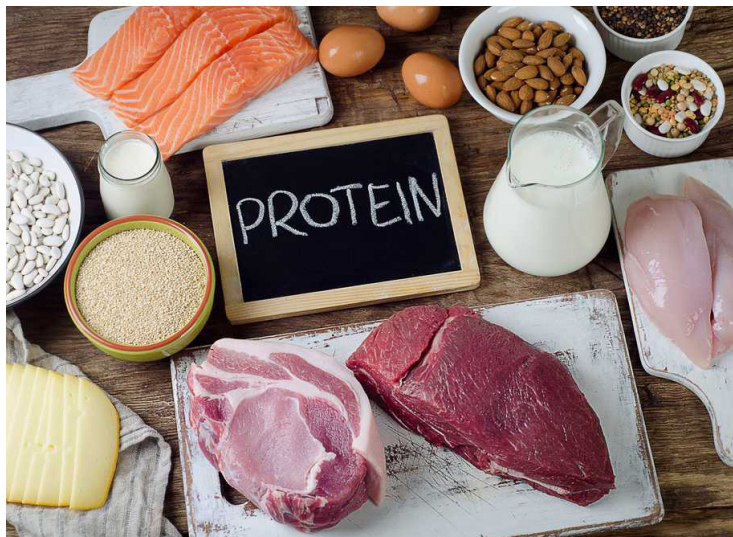
Good protein choices include: lean meats such as pork, fish, skinless poultry and low fat dairy. These foods also contain nutrients that we are generally not getting enough of from our diet: iron, zinc, magnesium and vitamins B6 and B12.

DID YOU KNOW?

Healthy amounts of both animal and plant proteins improve diet quality and have complementary benefits when eaten together.

DID YOU KNOW?

Loss of muscle mass and function begins at age 30 which may lead to sarcopenia.^{vi}



Choosing PROTEIN for your plate

With so many options available, keep these tips in mind when choosing the protein for your plate:

- Choose lean or extra-lean cuts of meat more often. Look for the word 'loin' on the package label.
- Vary your protein choices. Eating a variety of protein-packed foods each week alleviates boredom, changes up your meals, varies nutrient intake and enhances health benefits.
- Rethink your breakfast and lunch choices to include eggs, yogurt, ham and cheese instead of carbohydrate-rich foods such as cereal, bagels, toast, pastries, sandwiches, pasta.
- Sprinkle unsalted nuts or seeds on salads, use them in stuffing or make them part of a healthy snack.
- Add legumes, such as beans, to chili, stews, soups and casseroles.

DID YOU KNOW?

Pork tenderloin is as lean as boneless, skinless chicken breast.^{viii}

MORE TO PORK than just protein

Pork is a powerhouse of nutrition! Every bite provides high-quality protein, energy and key vitamins and minerals. Pork is also naturally low in sodium and saturated fat.

- Pork is loaded with important B vitamins including **B6** and **B12**. Your body depends on a daily replenishing of B vitamins to function properly.
- Pork is the leading food source of **thiamin**. Thiamin helps convert food into energy, regulate appetite and maintain the normal function of the nervous system, heart and muscles.
- Pork is the best meat source of **riboflavin**; it helps keep your nervous system, skin and eyes healthy.
- Pork is an excellent source of **selenium**, a mineral that acts like an antioxidant by helping prevent and repair cell damage.
- Pork is a good source of **iron**, an essential mineral for the body since it helps maintain healthy red blood cells.
- Pork delivers a good supply of **magnesium and phosphorus**. Both minerals help to strengthen bones and teeth.

Animal and plant foods ARE BETTER TOGETHER

Food synergy is the idea of two different foods interacting to deliver greater nutritional value – and greater potential health benefits – than if they are eaten alone. In other words, eating certain whole foods together may be more beneficial than eating them separately.

Combining vegetables and whole grains with lean meats provides a wide spectrum of essential nutrients and, a satisfying eating experience – ideally shared with family and friends. These benefits aren't found in highly processed foods, vitamin pills or other nutrition supplements such as protein powder and protein bars. Whole foods make great nutritional sense!

DID YOU KNOW?

Pork provides the 'meat factor' phenomenon which enhances the absorption of iron and zinc in other foods.^{ix}

ⁱ Institute of Medicine. *Dietary reference intakes for energy, carbohydrate, fiber, fat, fatty acids, cholesterol, protein, and amino acids*. National Academy Press, 2005.

ⁱⁱ Institute of Medicine. *Dietary reference intakes for energy, carbohydrate, fiber, fat, fatty acids, cholesterol, protein, and amino acids*. National Academy Press, 2005.

ⁱⁱⁱ Statistics Canada. Protein sources in the Canadian diet, 2015. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2018004-eng.htm>

^{iv} Institute of Medicine. 2005. *Dietary reference intakes for energy, carbohydrate, fiber, fat, fatty acids, cholesterol, protein, and amino acids*. National Academy Press.

^v Phillips S, et al. Protein "requirements" beyond the RDA: implications for optimizing health. *Applied Physiology, Nutrition, and Metabolism*, 2016. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Protein+%E2%80%98requirements%E2%80%99+beyond+the+RDA%3A+implications+for+optimizing>

^{vi} <https://www.webmd.com/healthy-aging/guide/sarcopenia-with-aging#1>

^{vii} Phillips S, et al. Protein "requirements" beyond the RDA: implications for optimizing health. *Applied Physiology, Nutrition, and Metabolism*, 2016. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=Protein+%E2%80%98requirements%E2%80%99+beyond+the+RDA%3A+implications+for+optimizing>

^{viii} Health Canada. Canadian Nutrient File (CNF), 2015.

^{ix} Muscle Foods: Meat Poultry and Seafood Technology, Breidenstein B, et al. pg 448, 1994.