

Pump Your Breakfast with Protein!

By Teaghan Trivers, PSP Fitness Instructor CFSU(CS)



We have all been told that breakfast is ‘the most important meal of the day’, but most of us are leaving out the key part of that meal. Protein.

You probably know you need to eat it, but what is it? Protein is a macronutrient that is essential to building muscle mass. It is made up of amino acids, also known as building blocks, for cell structure, growth and repair, immune system support, and providing energy.

So what is so powerful about protein? Foods that are high in protein take more work for the body to digest, using more energy, therefore burning more calories than digesting a high carbohydrate based meal. Because of the slow digestion process, it will keep you feeling full and satisfied longer, and curb cravings throughout the day.

The University of Missouri researchers compared the benefits of consuming a normal-protein breakfast to a high-protein breakfast and found the high-protein breakfast -- which contained 35 grams of protein -- prevented gains of body fat, reduced daily food intake and feelings of hunger, and stabilized glucose levels among overweight teens who would normally skip breakfast.

In general, it is recommended that 10-35 percent of your daily energy intake comes from protein. If you consume 2,000 calories per day, this would work out to be between 200 to 700 calories of protein per day. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recommends that the average individual should consume 0.8 grams of protein per kilogram or 0.35 grams per pound of body weight per day for general health. Keep in mind, this is individual based on age, sex, and level of physical activity.

Most of us don’t have a problem eating adequate amounts of protein throughout our day. Many of North Americans are consuming more than the recommendations. Adding more protein to our diets is not the key factor here, but choosing healthier options, can reduce the risk of disease, help you feel full and satisfied. Adding it to your morning meal can lead to a slimmer waistline, better mood, and more energy.

Start tomorrow, and try this recipe!

Blueberry Overnight Oats

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup uncooked old fashioned rolled oats



- 1/3 – 1/2 cup skim milk / almond milk
- ¼ - 1/3 cup low-fat Greek yogurt
- 1-1/2 teaspoons dried chia seeds
- 2 teaspoons maple syrup or honey (more or less to taste)
- 1/4 cup blueberries (or enough to fill jar)

Directions

In a half pint (1 cup) jar, add oats, milk, yogurt, chia seeds, and maple syrup. Put lid on jar and shake until well combined. Remove lid, add blueberries and stir until mixed throughout. Return lid to jar and refrigerate overnight or up to 2 days. Eat chilled.

1. L B Bauer, L J Reynolds, S M Douglas, M L Kearney, H A Hoertel, R S Shafer, J P Thyfault, H J Leidy. **A pilot study examining the effects of consuming a high-protein vs normal-protein breakfast on free-living glycemic control in overweight/obese 'breakfast skipping' adolescents.** *International Journal of Obesity*, 2015; DOI:[10.1038/ijo.2015.101](https://doi.org/10.1038/ijo.2015.101)