



The Pilates Connection Weight Loss Challenge

NEWSLETTER

September 6, 2010

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THIS WEEK'S TOPIC... NUTRITION 101 – PROTEIN

All About Nutrients

-The SparkPeople Resource Center

Protein is a nutrient that is needed daily by the body. Protein has many functions:

- It helps to build, repair, and maintain body cells and tissues like your skin, muscles, organs, blood, and even bones.
- It also forms enzymes and hormones that enable your body to function normally. Enzymes enable chemical reactions to take place in your body. Hormones signal the appropriate enzymes to start working on what the body needs.
- Proteins as antibodies protect you from disease-carrying bacteria and viruses.
- Proteins help regulate the quantity of fluids in the compartments of the body to maintain your fluid balance. Protein also controls the composition of the body fluids.
- Proteins control your body's acid-base balance. Normal processes of the body continually produce acids and their opposite, bases, which must be carried by the blood to the excretion organs. The blood must do this without allowing its own acid-base balance to be affected. The proteins in your blood accomplish this task.
- Only protein can perform all the functions described above. But it will be sacrificed to provide needed calories if insufficient fat and carbohydrates foods are not eaten. The body's top-priority need is energy, and protein is a source of calories (4 calories per gram). As with all foods, if you eat more protein than you need, the extra will be stored as fat.

The Purpose of Amino Acids

During digestion, protein is crushed and mixed with saliva in the mouth. It then enters the stomach and comes in contact with very strong acid. This acid helps to uncoil the protein's tangled strands.

Stomach enzymes attack the protein bonds, breaking apart the protein strands into smaller pieces. The protein pieces enter the small intestine where the next team of enzymes accomplishes the final breakdown of the protein strands into free amino acids. The cells of the small intestine release the amino acids into the bloodstream.

Once the amino acids are circulating in the blood stream they are available to be taken up by any cell of the body. Amino acids combine with other amino acids to form the specific proteins needed by the body.

The many different proteins in your body are all made up of these amino acid building blocks. There are a total of 20 different types of amino acids with nutritional significance. The body cells connect these building blocks to form each specific protein that is needed.

Nine amino acids are considered ESSENTIAL

Your body cannot make them, and your food choices must supply them. Their names may sound familiar: histamine, isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, phenylalanine, threonine, tryptophan, and valine.

The other amino acids are NONESSENTIAL

Your body can make them if you consume enough of the nine essential amino acids during the day. Believe it or not, 10,000 different proteins may exist in a single cell of your body. Each one requires a different arrangement of amino acids.

Sources of Protein

Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, milk, cheese, yogurt and soybeans provide all nine essential amino acids. For this reason, they are considered high quality or COMPLETE proteins.

Plant sources of protein include legumes (dried beans, peas, and lentils), nuts, and seeds. Grain products such as barley, wheat, millet, rye, as well as many vegetables have smaller amounts of protein. These plant sources are all INCOMPLETE proteins because they do not contain all of the nine essential amino acids that the body needs.

It is possible to still get your complete proteins without eating animal products. Luckily, the essential amino acids present in one plant food can “connect” with the essential amino acids in another plant food to form a complete protein. This is the principle of a healthy vegetarian diet. There is no need for combining specific foods at each meal, as once thought. Your body can make its own complete proteins if you eat a variety of plant foods and eat enough calories throughout the day.

How Much is Enough

Health organizations recommend limiting your protein intake to 10-35% of your total calorie needs. SparkPeople.com is programmed to calculate your protein baseline to be 20% of your total calorie intake. For someone who is consuming 2000 calories, this would equal 100 grams of protein (at 4 calories per gram, equals 400 calories). In most cases, this example protein intake could still be considered healthy if it ranged from 50 grams (10% of intake) to 175 grams (35%).

To give you an idea of the amount of protein you can find in certain foods, check out the following list:

- 1 cup milk...8 grams
- 1 ounce cheese...7 grams
- 1 ounce meat...7 grams
- 1 egg...6 grams
- ½ cup legumes...7 grams
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter...8 grams
- ¼ cup nuts...6 grams
- ½ cup cooked non-starchy vegetable...2 grams
- 1 serving of grain (1 slice bread, ½ bun, 1 c. dry cereal, 1 small muffin)...3 grams

Weight Loss Challenge Winner of the Week:

Karen Novak is this week's biggest loser! Congratulations Karen...enjoy your free classes.

This is the last week of the current Weight Loss challenge 16 weeks. Starting next week we will be doing monthly weigh-ins and will no longer have weekly winners but will be working toward loss as a group and one big winner at the end!

MAKE SOMEDAY TODAY!

RECIPE

HEALTHIFIED CILANTRO-ORANGE MARINATED FLANK STEAK

- 1 pound beef flank steak, trimmed of fat
- 1/3 cup reconstituted Cascadian Farm® organic orange juice concentrate
- 1/4 cup snipped fresh cilantro
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper

- 2 red and/or green sweet peppers, halved
- 1 red onion, cut into 1/2-inch-thick slices

1. Score both sides of steak in a diamond pattern by making shallow diagonal cuts at 1-inch intervals. Place steak in a resealable plastic bag set in a shallow dish.
2. For marinade: In a small bowl, stir together orange juice, cilantro, vinegar, oil, garlic, cumin, coriander, salt, and crushed red pepper. Pour over steak in bag. Seal bag; turn to coat steak. Marinate in the refrigerator for 4 to 6 hours, turning bag occasionally.
3. Drain steak, reserving marinade. Brush sweet pepper halves and onion slices with reserved marinade; discard any remaining marinade. Set vegetables aside. For a charcoal grill, place steak on the rack of an uncovered grill directly over medium coals. Grill for 8 minutes. Turn steak. Place vegetables, cut sides down, on grill rack with steak. Grill steak and vegetables for 9 to 13 minutes or until steak is medium doneness (160°F) and vegetables are crisp-tender, turning vegetables occasionally to brown evenly. (For a gas grill, preheat grill. Reduce heat to medium. Place steak and later vegetables on grill rack over heat. Cover and grill as above.)
4. To serve, thinly slice steak across the grain and cut sweet peppers into strips. Serve with grilled onion.

Servings 4. 3 oz. of Steak and ¾ cup Vegetables = 250 Calories. .5 Starch, 1 Vegetable, 3 oz. Protein.

Recipe from eatbetteramerica.com

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