

IN THE KNOW ABOUT NUTRITION

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Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service-Lubbock County * PO Box 10536 * Lubbock, TX 79408
 916 Main, Suite 401 Lubbock, TX 79401 * 775-1740 * Fax 775-1758 * <http://lubbock.agrilife.org>

Protein for Senior Adults

What is Protein?

Protein is made up of branch chain amino acids (BCAA). There are 20 amino acids, 10 essential and 10 non-essential. Essential BCAA can only be provided through our diet. This means that we must eat enough protein to provide our bodies with the essential nutrients to keep us healthy.

Protein can be helpful in many different ways for the body. Some examples of what protein does for the body are;

- Helps build tissue and muscle.
- Protects the body by helping create antibodies.
- Helps transport signals and hormones in the body by serving as a messenger.



What does protein do for you?

In senior adults, muscle breakdown can lead to a decreased quality of life, and even death. Protein allows us to rebuild and/or maintain muscle, which is important for our everyday life. Protein foods also have other nutrition benefits.

- Red meat is an excellent source of zinc, which is great for your immune system.

- Salmon can be an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids, which are great for your heart health.

How much protein do you need?

The Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for protein in adults is 0.8g/kg. This recommendation is what should be followed for good protein status in adults.

Your Weight in Pounds	Number of Grams of Protein Needed per Day
150	55
160	58
170	62
180	65
190	69
200	73
210	76
220	80

A great way to make sure you are getting enough protein is to eat a whole balanced meal and remember to include protein foods with meals, whether animal or plant.

Sources of Protein

- Animal meats: beef, pork, chicken, turkey
- Dairy products: milk, yogurt, and cheese
- Seafood: salmon, shrimp, Tilapia, tuna

- Nuts: almonds, peanuts, cashews
- Soy: tofu
- Beans: pinto, black, chickpeas
- Eggs
- Protein supplements are also a great source



Recipe: Black Bean Burgers

Ingredients:

- 1 can low sodium black beans
- 1 egg, beaten
- ½ cup bread crumbs
- ¼ cup onion, minced
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon pepper

Optional:

- Cheese slices
- Lettuce leaves
- Mushroom
- Onion
- Tomato
- Whole wheat bread or hamburger buns

Instructions:

1. Wash hands and sanitize surfaces and equipment before, after, and during food preparation.
2. Mash beans with fork.
3. Stir mashed beans, egg, bread crumbs, onion, pepper, and oil together until combined. Shape into 4 inch patties. Wash hands.
4. Heat a non-stick skillet over medium heat. Spray with non stick cooking spray.
5. Place patties in skillet and cover with a lid. Cook patties for 5 minutes on the first side. Flip patties, cover and cook for 4 more minutes.
6. Serve with optional ingredients.

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per recipe	
Serving Size: 1 burger	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	200
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 6g	9%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
<i>Trans Fat</i> 0g	
Cholesterol 45mg	15%
Sodium 260mg	11%
Total Carbohydrates 28g	9%
Dietary Fiber 8g	32%
Total Sugars 2g	
Added Sugars	NA*
Protein 10g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 71mg	6%
Iron 3mg	15%
Potassium 383mg	8%
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	
NA* - We are currently in the process of integrating the new FDA Nutrition Standards. Added Sugar information is not currently available for the recipe. We will be updating the information shortly.	

Sources:

- <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/protein-foods-group-food-gallery>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4555150/>
- <https://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/primer/howgeneswork/protein>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4555150/>
- <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe/black-bean-burgers/>