

THE PLANT-BASED LIFESTYLE

What is Protein?

You've probably heard the words "Fat", "Carbs" and "Protein". These three are the macronutrients found in food. They are "macro" because they comprise the bulk of the weight of the food. Carbs (carbohydrates) and fat are carbon containing compounds and provide our bodies with energy. Protein is a nitrogen containing compound used by our bodies to build and repair tissues as well as for making enzymes and hormones important to our bodies' functioning. Proteins are made up of amino acids. Our bodies can make most amino acids, but some need to come from the diet. These are called the "essential amino acids". All essential amino acids can be found in plants. Protein, carbohydrates, and fat all work together toward a common goal - keeping our body healthy and functioning



So Where Do You Get Your Protein?

If I had a dollar for every time someone has asked me that question I'd be a rich woman! No sooner do you begin a whole-food plant based diet than someone will ask you "where do you get your protein?" Never mind that they don't really know what protein is or does but they need to know where you get it!

The best answer I have heard is to ask them "Where does a horse get its protein?" The answer: from plants! Horses, cows, oxen, elephants etc are all herbivores. They eat only plants and so obviously plants have protein! Who knew? And I don't think anyone doubts the strength of one of these animals and that they are getting enough protein. How much protein do you need? Read on.

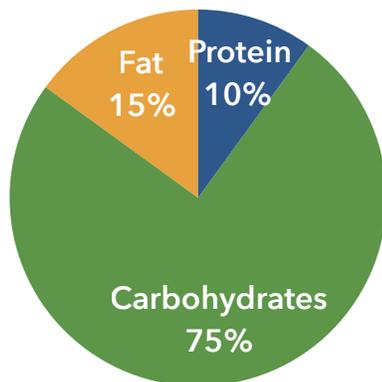
MACRO **PROTEIN** **FAT**
NUTRIENTS **CARBOHYDRATES**



How much protein do you need?

Far less than you think. The amount of protein needed in a day depends on a person's body weight. The U.S. RDA is .8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight. That is equivalent to about 8% to 10% of daily calories. So let's take a 130 pound (which is 59 kilograms) female. She would require 47 grams of protein per day or 189 calories from protein. This is easily achieved through a whole-food plant-based diet.

The daily breakdown of macronutrients on a whole-food plant-based diet looks like this:



Resources

Check out these resources if you want to learn more about protein and a whole-foods plant based diet.

- *Proteinaholic* by Garth Davis, M.D.
- [How Much Protein Do We Need?](#)
- [Mystique of Protein](#)

What foods have protein?

Every food! That's the simple answer. All WHOLE foods have protein. Broccoli has protein, bananas have protein, spinach has protein. In fact, if you ate nothing but broccoli all day to meet your daily caloric needs you'd get more than enough protein! Here is a sampling of foods a 130 pound woman could eat in a day to get enough protein:

Breakfast: 1/2 cup oatmeal topped with 1 banana, 1/2 cup blueberries and 1 tablespoon each of chia seeds and ground flax seeds.

Lunch: 1/2 cup brown rice topped with 2 cups mixed vegetables, 1/2 cup black beans and 1/4 cup pico di gallo.

Dinner: Tu-No Casserole*, 2 cups roasted broccoli florets, side salad.

Snacks: 1 apple with 2 tablespoons oil-free hummus, sweet potato wedges.

The above meal plan provides 55 grams of protein, more than enough for the 130 pound woman. If you want to know more, email alexandra@resolvehealthandfitness.com to learn about our whole-food plant-based education programs, consultations, and meal plans.



*You can find this Tu-No Casserole recipe [here](#).