

Protein

Protein is made up of **amino acids**. Amino acids help **build red blood cells, form hormones, and build neurotransmitters**. When there are enough carbohydrates in the diet, protein is maximized to build muscle.

There are 9 amino acids that we need to consume from food. All nine are found in **animal-based proteins and in soybeans**. To obtain these nine amino acids from plant-based proteins, you must have a **variety of these plant-based foods**.

Protein needs to **make up 15-20% of calories** daily. Generally, in an adequate diet, eating protein at most meals and snacks will meet one's needs.

Animal-Based Protein



Animal-based Sources	Amount (grams)
3 ounces of pork, poultry, fish, beef, seafood	21-27 g
1 cup plain or flavored Greek yogurt	15-24 g
½ cup cottage cheese	14 g
1 slice or 1 stick of cheese (1 ½ oz)	6 g
1 egg (white + yolk)	6 g
¼ cup shredded cheese	6 g
1 cup milk	8 g

See next page for plant-based sources!

Plant-Based Protein



When we produce protein from animal and plant sources, we utilize limited natural resources. It is important to make choices with low environmental impact to reduce water consumption, land use, and greenhouse gas emissions. **Plant-based options have the lowest environmental impact.**

Plant-based Sources	Amount (grams)
½ cup beans, lentils, chickpeas	9 g
¼ cup hummus	5 g
¼ cup nuts	7 g
¼ cup seeds	6 g
2 Tbsp nut butter	7 g
1 cup soy milk	8 g
½ block of firm tofu	24 g
½ cup shelled edamame	13 g
1 cup cooked quinoa	10 g
1 cup cooked rolled oats, brown rice, amaranth, soba noodles, teff, etc	5-8 g
1/2 cup tempeh	16 g
1/3 cup seitan	21 g