

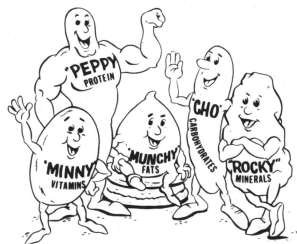
# HOME ECONOMICS

## GUIDE



Published by the University of Missouri-Columbia  
 Extension Division  
 College of Home Economics

APR 14 1983



**Nutrichat Series**

### Nutrifacts About Protein

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Test Your Nutrition Knowledge. Rate yourself by checking either the "true" or "false" box next to each of the following statements.

- |   | True                     | False                    |   | True                     | False                    |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Carbohydrates and fats can function like protein in building and repairing body tissue.      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. A plant protein alone is not sufficient to meet body needs.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Protein is "spared" by consumption of adequate amounts of carbohydrates and fats for energy. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. Athletic performance is improved by taking protein supplements.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. People in the United States consume adequate amounts of protein.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Neither high- nor low-protein diets are useful in weight loss.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Protein needs do not change throughout the life cycle.                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. Meeting protein needs is expensive because animal proteins are needed to maintain good health.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. All food sources of protein are of equal quality.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Protein is provided only in foods found in the meat and meat alternate group of the Five Food Groups, outlined in the Daily Food Guide. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Now check your answers.  
 Correct responses score one point.**

1. **False.** The major function of fats and carbohydrates is to provide the body with energy. The most important job of protein is building and repairing every cell in the body. No other nutrient can take protein's place.
2. **True.** Carbohydrates and fats are the body's main sources of energy or calories. If sufficient amounts of carbohydrates and fats are not included in the daily diet, protein will be broken down and used for needed energy. When valuable protein is used to meet energy needs, building and repair of body tissues cannot continue. Decreased growth in children and muscle wasting may occur.
3. **True.** Protein deficiencies are rare in the United States. Most people consume more than enough protein.
4. **False.** Protein needs are increased with growth, major surgery or burns, and with certain drug therapy. Elderly people have the same protein needs as younger adults. However, since some elderly people eat less food than younger adults, they must select foods carefully to ensure adequate amounts of protein, vitamins and minerals without unwanted weight gain.
5. **False.** Proteins are present in a wide variety of plant and animal sources; however, the quality of protein varies from source to source. Proteins from animal sources are of higher quality than proteins from plant sources.
6. **True.** Since plant sources are of lower quality than animal proteins, it is necessary to combine at least two plant proteins at the same time or an animal protein with a plant source. By following simple rules, the quality of plant proteins can be improved, thus adding inexpensive, nutritious variety to your diet. The Daily Food Guide will help you plan sufficient amounts of high quality protein into your daily meals and snacks using a variety of protein sources. Remember, the body does not store protein, so adequate amounts must be consumed daily.
7. **False.** Large amounts of extra protein do not improve athletic performance. When strenuous activity occurs, such as athletic events and heavy labor, total calories should be increased by increasing amounts of foods from all the groups in the Daily Food Guide rather than just increasing protein foods.
8. **True.** Neither *high* nor *low* protein diets are

useful when trying to lose body fat. Carbohydrates, protein and fat are the nutrients which furnish calories to the body. Total daily calorie intake from these three sources should be balanced with physical activity to maintain one's weight. High protein diets are costly and not effective; low protein diets are similar to the starvation diets people in underdeveloped countries must eat. One should reduce calorie intake in order to lose weight and at the same time, physical activity should be increased to "burn up" those calories. Remember, excess protein can be converted to fat.

9. **False.** When shopping for protein foods, keep in mind that regardless of price, the protein *quality* of all meats is similar. Meeting your protein needs from a variety of plant and animal sources including fish and poultry, has several advantages. Stretching small amounts of animal protein with a plant protein food can save you money because animal proteins tend to be more expensive. We could lower fat intake and increase intake of fiber or roughage by lowering our consumption of animal protein and increasing consumption of plant protein. Both are dietary changes that could possibly improve our health. Also, meeting protein needs by combining plant and animal sources adds variety to your diet.
10. **False.** Examples of foods from the **Milk and Cheese Group** which provide **one serving** of protein are:
  - ½ cup cottage cheese
  - 2 ounces of cheese
 Examples of foods from the **Bread and Cereal Group** which provide **one serving** of protein are:
  - 1 cup of cooked spaghetti
  - 1½ cups cooked rice.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

#### How did you rate?

- 9 to 10 — Excellent! You are a "nutrition superstar."
- 7 to 8 — Good, but you may want to "bone up" on some points.
- 6 or below — Fair to poor. You need to read guidesheets on proteins, carbohydrates, fats and other nutrients.

For additional information about the Nutrifacts topic, refer to guidesheets in the NUTRICHAT SERIES.