

Too much protein in US Diet

The truth is, most Americans get *way too much* protein, and vegetarians or complete herbivores can easily get more than enough protein in their diet.

T. Colin Campbell, PhD, author of *The China Study* states: “What we found [from 27 years of research] was shocking. Low-protein diets inhibited the initiation of cancer by aflatoxin, regardless of how much of this carcinogen was administered to these animals. . . . What protein consistently and strongly promoted cancer? Casein, which makes up to 87% of cow’s milk protein, promoted all stages of the cancer process. The safe proteins were from plants, including wheat and soy.”ⁱ He continues: **[Cancer] development was almost entirely dependent on how much [milk] protein was consumed, regardless of how much [carcinogen] was consumed!**ⁱⁱ So it is clear that animal protein is harmful.

Dr. Campbell asked the next question: For all of these experiments [mentioned up to page 59], we were using casein, which makes up 87% of cow’s milk protein. So the next logical question was whether plant protein, tested in the same way, has the same effect on cancer promotion as casein. The answer is an astonishing “NO.” *In these experiments, plant protein did not promote cancer growth, even at the higher levels of intake. . . . Gluten, the protein of wheat, did not produce the same result as casein, even when fed at the same 20% level.*ⁱⁱⁱ

So with it scientifically established that animal protein is the fuel for cancer and that plant based protein is safe, how much protein do humans need?

Dr. Campbell believes based on scientific research that [r]elative to total calorie intake, **only 5-6%** dietary protein is required to replace the protein regularly excreted by the body (as amino acids).^{iv}

So what are these amino acids that need replacing? The eight essential and fourteen nonessential amino acids are all found in plants in generous amounts.^v All the essential and nonessential amino acids are represented in *single unrefined starches* such as rice, corn, wheat, and potatoes in amounts in excess of every individual’s needs, even if they are endurance athletes or weight lifters.^{vi}

The PhD believes 5% of total calorie intake should be protein, how about doctors? According to Dr. John McDougall: Protein deficiency is almost unknown in humans worldwide, but protein excess is a real problem in developed societies. When the protein content of the diet exceeds 15% of calories consumed, the body’s liver and kidneys are burdened with the task of removing the excessive amounts of proteins. Under this strain, the liver and kidneys enlarge and the physiology of the kidneys changes, causing the loss of significant amounts of calcium from our bones into the urine. Foods from animals lead to this problem not only because they are higher in protein content than are most vegetable foods, but also because the proteins they contain cause more calcium loss than do equal amounts of vegetable proteins. (This is an effect of sulfur-containing amino acids, which are more plentiful in meats.)^{vii}

We don’t need large intakes of proteins: This is demonstrated by the fact that we drink human breast milk (**which is 5% protein**) only in infancy, at the time in life when we are growing fastest and require more protein in our diet than we ever will need again.^{viii}

So at the peak of our physical demands, infancy, the human body needs **5%** of calories from protein.

How do you get 5% of your diet to be comprised of protein? Eat unrefined plant based foods. Fruit is among the lowest protein per calorie food item in the plant world and it generally is 5% protein. So just eating plant based meets basic protein needs. Here are some examples of the percent of calories found as proteins in these foods:^{ix}

-kidney beans-26%	-Brussels Sprouts-21%	-corn-12%	-grapefruit-8%
-oatmeal-16%	-potatoes-11%	-tofu-34%	-tomatoes-16%

Therefore, eating plant strong will allow for adequate protein needs without causing strain on the kidneys or liver or causing calcium to be flushed from human bones or assisting the growth of cancer.

Harvard Medical School recommends: “The two Harvard studies add to a growing body of evidence that emphasizing plant protein sources is a better bet for long-term health.”^x Harvard recommends against a high-animal protein diet: “Do it the wrong way, though, and shrinking your waistline could also shrink the number of birthdays you get to celebrate.”^{xi}

ⁱ T. Colin Campbell, PhD, *The China Study* (Dallas: BenBella, 2006), 8.

ⁱⁱ T. Colin Campbell, PhD, *The China Study* (Dallas: BenBella, 2006), 54.

ⁱⁱⁱ T. Colin Campbell, PhD, *The China Study* (Dallas: BenBella, 2006), 59.

^{iv} T. Colin Campbell, PhD, *The China Study* (Dallas: BenBella, 2006), 308.

^v John McDougall, MD, *The McDougall Program* (New York: Plume, 1991), 43.

^{vi} John McDougall, MD, *The McDougall Program* (New York: Plume, 1991), 45.

^{vii} John McDougall, MD, *The McDougall Program* (New York: Plume, 1991), 43.

^{viii} John McDougall, MD, *The McDougall Program* (New York: Plume, 1991), 44.

^{ix} John McDougall, MD, *The McDougall Program* (New York: Plume, 1991), 44.

^x <http://www.health.harvard.edu/healthbeat/going-low-carb-pick-the-right-proteins>

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