



PROTEIN, PROTEIN POWDERS, AND GELATIN

When considering daily protein intake, it's important to understand how the needs of the average person differ from those of athletes or regular gymgoers. Protein powders are a convenient way to boost protein intake, especially for breakfast in a filling smoothie. While collagen is commonly added to these drinks, many wonder if gelatin can also be used therapeutically, much like bone broth, which has shown healing benefits for some. Additionally, finding suitable protein powders for those who are dairy-free or vegan is a common concern for individuals looking to maintain a balanced, plant-based diet.



In this quick guide, we'll explore daily protein requirements, the differences between collagen and gelatin, and provide recommendations for protein powders, including options for those who are dairy-free or vegan.

Daily Protein Needs

Protein requirements vary based on factors like age, activity level, and health status. Most experts suggest 1.2 to 1.8 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight for adults, with higher needs for athletes, older adults, and those who are pregnant or lactating. It's essential to spread protein intake throughout the day, as the body has a limited ability to store amino acids, typically only about a day's worth. Click the button below for a very comprehensive resource to help understand and calculate your daily protein needs.

[Click Here to Calculate Your Protein Requirement](#)

Higher protein intake offers benefits like:

- [Increased satiety](#) and appetite control (especially if the first meal includes a generous serving of protein)
- [Aids weight loss and weight loss maintenance, more here](#)
- [Aids in building muscle](#)
- [Optimizes athletic performance and recovery](#)

Replacing some carbohydrate intake with protein typically results in better blood sugar control. Higher intake should be balanced



Below are various protein options, including both animal and plant-based sources, to give you an idea of the amount of protein in different foods to help meet your daily protein goals.

Animal-Based Protein Sources



Chicken breast: (1 serving, 3 oz or 85g cooked): ~26g protein



Chicken thigh: (1 serving, 3 oz or 85g cooked): ~21g protein



Turkey breast: (1 serving, 3 oz or 85g cooked): ~25g protein



Sardines: (1 can, 3 oz or 85g): ~21g protein



Salmon: (1 serving, 3 oz or 85g cooked): ~22g protein



Beef: (1 serving, 3 oz or 85g cooked): ~22g protein



Lamb: (1 serving, 3 oz or 85g cooked): ~23g protein



Eggs: (2 large eggs): ~12g protein



Yogurt: (1 cup, plain, whole milk): ~8-10g protein



Kefir: (1 cup, plain, whole milk): ~8-11g protein

Vegetarian Protein Sources



Tempeh: (1 serving, 3 oz or 85g): ~16g protein



Tofu: (firm, 1 serving, 3 oz or 85g): ~10g protein



Lentils: (1/2 cup cooked): ~9g protein



Chickpeas: (1/2 cup cooked): ~7g protein



Quinoa: (1 cup cooked): ~8g protein



Peanuts: (1/4 cup or ~35g): ~9g protein



Almonds: (1/4 cup or ~35g): ~7g protein



Hemp seeds: (3 tablespoons or ~30g): ~10g protein



Chia seeds: (2 tablespoons or ~28g): ~4g protein



Pea protein powder: (1 scoop, ~30g): ~20g protein



Protein Powders

We recommend a food-first approach, however, for convenience, especially with dietary restrictions, protein powders can be helpful at times. Popular options include:



Collagen peptides (not a complete protein):

supports skin, hair, nails, joints, and gut health

- E.g.: [Natural Force Organic Grassfed Collagen](#), [Vital Proteins Collagen Peptides](#)



Paleo protein powder: a complete protein from grass-fed beef and ideal for those following a paleo diet

- E.g.: [Design's for Health PurePaleo Protein Vanilla](#)



Pea protein (or pea/hemp/rice blends): not a complete protein but it is often combined with other plant-based proteins like hemp or rice to provide all essential amino acids, making it ideal for those following a vegan diet.

- E.g.: [Nuzest Clean Lean Protein](#)



Whey protein: a complete protein from dairy, ideal for muscle growth and recovery but not suitable for those who are lactose intolerant or avoiding dairy.

- E.g.: [Natural Force Organic Grass-Fed Whey](#)

Important Note: If you plan to use a protein powder regularly, it's recommended to request the company's Certificate of Analysis (COA) to check the levels of heavy metals per serving. Unfortunately, the manufacturing process can often result in products with higher levels of heavy metals

Gelatin vs. Collagen

Gelatin is made similarly to collagen, but collagen is processed more to form short-chain peptides. Collagen contains a profile of amino acids aligned with what we need to build and strengthen skin, hair, nails, and joints. It is also great for gut health and, therefore, an excellent choice for those with gastrointestinal issues.

The main difference is that gelatin “gels” when mixed with liquid, whereas collagen mixes easily with hot or cold liquids and does not gel. Therefore, gelatin is often used as a thickener in recipes such as jello, soups, gravies, gummy bears, and custards. It can be used as a [binder to replace eggs](#). Gelatin can also be used as a thickener or egg substitute in cooking.

Both are great, flavorless additions to boost amino acids such as:

- Glycine, a critical amino acid needed for making glutathione for detoxification and also an inhibitory neurotransmitter that promotes relaxation (it's important to ensure sufficiency of glycine if using NAC supplements)
- Proline, which is critical for the production of cartilage and benefits wound healing and heart health (consider especially for those recovering from surgery)
- Hydroxyproline, an amino acid derivative made from proline and lysine (which should be avoided in large amounts in those prone to kidney stones)