

Claremont-Mudd-Scripps Sports Medicine FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: How much protein do I need daily, as an athlete?
How much more do I need if I am trying to gain weight?

Answer: The amount of protein needed in your daily diet is related to your body weight and activity level, and may be surprisingly different than you think. The recommended amount of dietary protein for athletes ranges from 1.2 to as much as 2.0 grams of protein per kilogram body weight per day (g/kg/d), with ultra-endurance athletes and extreme power lifters in the upper range.¹⁻⁵ The average non or occasional athlete needs only 0.8 to 1.0 g/kg/day.²⁻⁴ For example, a 125 lb (56.8 kg) athlete would require 1.6 to 4.0 oz (45.4 to 113.6 g) and a 180 lb (84.1 kg) athlete would require 2.4 to 5.9 oz (67.3 to 168 g) of dietary protein on a daily basis, depending on their level of intensity. Some common foods and their protein content are: 1 large egg, 0.2 oz (6.3g); 1 cup scrambled eggs, 0.86 oz (24.4 g); 3½ oz chicken (deck of cards in size), 1.1 oz (31 g); 1 cup soybeans, 1 oz (28.6 g); and 12 oz NF milk, 0.85 oz (24 g).⁶ Increasing protein intake in the form of foods or powders beyond daily needs is not necessary to gain mass. Adequate rest and proper timing of meals with adequate energy (carbohydrate) and protein sources are important for muscle tissue (re)building during recovery periods.^{1, 3, 4}

FYI: 1 kg = 2.2 lb, 1 g = .035 oz, 1 oz = 23.3 g

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3. Campbell B, Kreider RB, Ziegenfuss T, et al. International Society of Sports Nutrition position stand: protein and exercise. *J Int Soc Sports Nutr.* 2007 Sep 26 2007;4.

4. Dunford M. *Advanced Exercise Nutrition.* 1.1 ed. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics; 2007.

5. Houtkooper L, Abbot JM, Nimmo M. Nutrition for throwers, jumpers, and combined events athletes. *J Sports Sci.* 2007 Dec 2007;25 Suppl 1.

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Craig Harnetiaux, MS, ATC

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Write to us at SportsMedicine@cms.claremont.edu and let us know what you think.

We hate spam as much as you do. To have your name added or removed from our mailing list, just type ADD or REMOVE in the subject line and please include your sport when contacting us.

