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UNDERSTANDING PROTEIN QUALITY AND ITS IMPACT ON HUNGER REGULATION

The quality of a protein source is primarily determined by its amino acid profile. Amino acids are the building blocks of proteins, critical for the development and repair of new cells and tissues. Our hunger drive is deeply connected to our body's need for these essential compounds, making protein an important dietary element.



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AMINO ACID SCORE OF DIFFERENT PROTEINS

Protein	Amino Acid Score	Description
Whey Protein	118	Whey protein is the most complete amino acid profile, including BCAAs like leucine, isoleucine, and valine, which are crucial for muscle protein synthesis.
Beef	111	Red meat, such as beef, provides a comprehensive amino acid profile. It is an excellent source of iron and other micronutrients, supporting overall health.
Chicken Breast	108	Chicken and turkey are popular protein sources with a well-rounded amino acid profile, making them valuable for muscle maintenance and growth.
Salmon	105	Fish, especially fatty fish like salmon, offers a rich amino acid profile along with beneficial omega-3 fatty acids; they support heart health, reduce inflammation, and promote muscle repair.
Legumes (e.g. Peas and Lentils)	60-80	Legumes have a more limited amino acid profile compared to animal sources. They are deficient in some essential amino acids but are still valuable for their fiber content and plant-based protein.

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THE CONNECTION - AMINO ACIDS AND HUNGER REGULATION

GLP-1, Ghrelin, and Leptin

Protein sources with a greater amino acid profile stimulate the release of glucagon-like peptide 1 (GLP-1), which promotes satiety. GLP-1, along with hormones like ghrelin and leptin, plays a crucial role in regulating our hunger signals. Ghrelin, known as the "hunger hormone," increases appetite, while leptin signals fullness.



Role of the Hypothalamus

The hypothalamus in our brain is primed to receive these hormonal signals to stop eating. When we consume high-quality protein sources, these receptors function efficiently, promoting satiety and preventing overeating. However, low-protein foods fail to stimulate these receptors effectively, leading to persistent hunger and increased caloric intake in a quest for essential nutrients.

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To incorporate 0.8 to 1 gram of protein per pound of ideal body weight into one's life, consider the following steps:

- Identify your ideal body weight and determine your daily protein target.
- Include high-quality protein sources such as whey, beef, venison, poultry, fish, and legumes in your meals.
- Distribute your protein intake evenly across meals to maximize absorption and utilization.
- Shoot for 30-50g per meal
- Consider protein supplements if necessary to meet your daily requirements.
- Monitor your hunger levels and adjust protein intake based on your body's signals.
- Pro tip: Break your fast with your first intake of 30-50g and avoid beginning any meal with low protein foods – or you may find yourself eating more than you need.

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