

Optimize Your Brain

Protein for Mental Health

Small frequent meals with protein help the brain synthesize dopamine and serotonin and stabilize blood glucose to help you feel better. Be sure to also eat vegetables, fruits, and whole grains.

Benefits of eating enough protein

- Less fatigue, particularly in the afternoons
- Better sleep
- More energy
- Hungry less often
- Better and more stable moods
- Higher metabolism from having more muscle mass

How much protein should I eat?

The quick calculation for your target protein intake is 8 grams of protein for every 20 lbs of body weight, or one-third of your caloric intake is protein. Most people feel better when they eat at least 20 grams in the morning, 20 grams in the afternoon and 20 grams in the evening. The maximum amount of protein per day is 120 grams.

Your Weight (lbs)	Target (g protein)	Acceptable Range (g protein)
100	40	36-45
120	48	43-54
140	56	50-63
160	64	57-72
180	72	64-81
200	80	71-90

Lizard Brain Treat

- 1/4 cup of fruit juice or a 'tot box' of juice
- 1/4 cup of nuts (almonds, cashews, hazelnuts)

Healthy Protein Sources

Legumes			Nuts		
Firm Tofu	1/2 c	20 g	Nuts	1/4 c	8 g
Tofu	1/2 c	10 g	Seeds	2 T	3 g
Tempeh	1/2 c	16 g	Nut butter	2 T	8 g
Lentils	1/2 c	9 g	Seed butter	2 T	5 g
Refried beans	1/2 c	8 g	Milk Products		
Whole beans	1/2 c	7 g	Cottage cheese (LF)	1/2 c	12 g
Gardenburger	1 patty	11 g	High Protein Yogurt	1/2 c	8-9 g
Seed Grains			Not Milk or cheese		
Quinoa	1/2 c	11 g	Eggs		
Barley	1/2 c	10 g	Egg, whole	1	7 g
Dark rye flour	1/2 c	9 g			
Millet	1/2 c	4 g			
Oats	1/2 c	3 g	Note: Egg yolks contain nutrients that are excellent for mental health.		
Brown rice	1/2 c	3 g			
White rice	1/2 c	3 g	Other		
Dairy Substitutes			Protein powder	1 T	9-15 g
Soy milk	1 c	6 g	Yogurt (LF)	1 c	8-14 g
Soy cheese	1 oz	4-7 g	Wild fish	3 oz	21 g
Soy yogurt	1 c	6 g	Chicken, Turkey, Beef, Pork	3 oz	21 g

Portion control

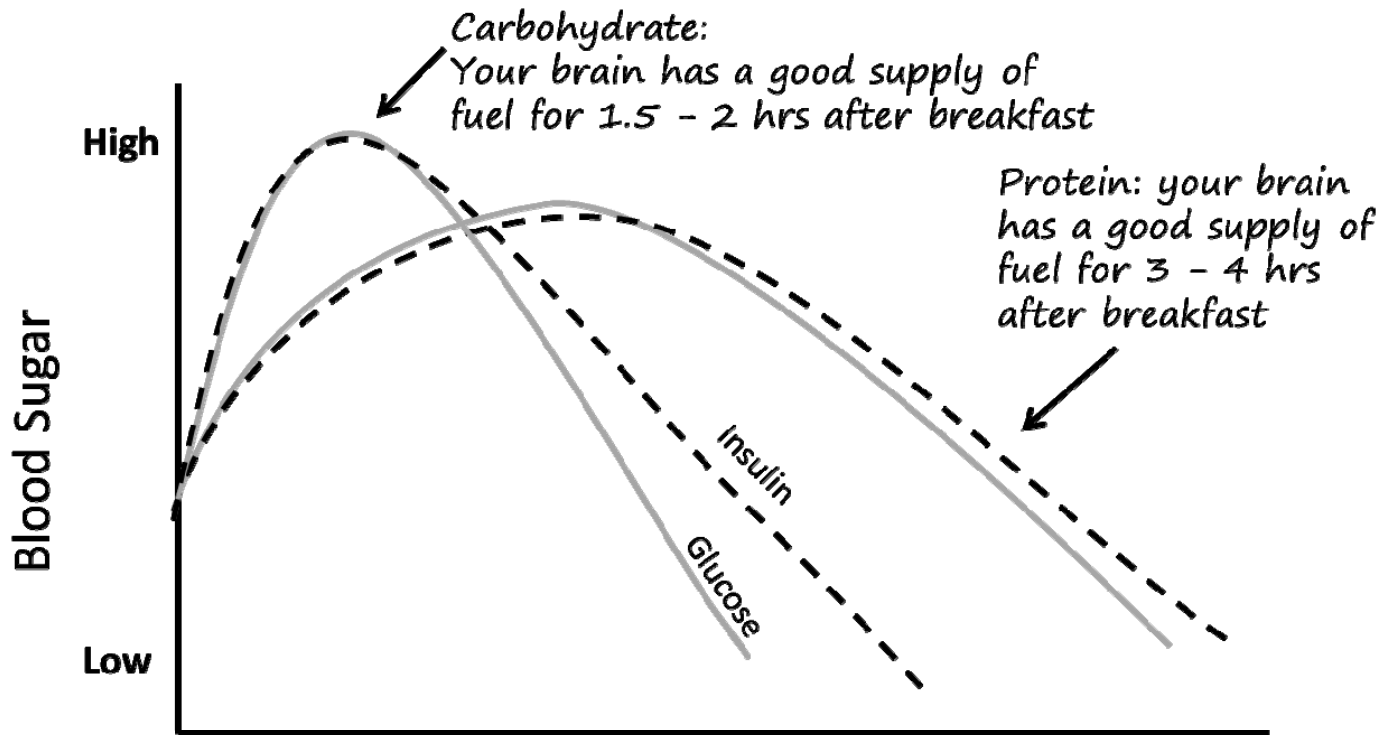
Here are some visual clues to help you keep servings to the proper size:

- 3 oz of any meat= a deck of playing cards
- 1/2 c cooked grain = a small fist
- 1 oz cheese = a thumb
- 1 oz nuts = a golf ball
- 1 T nut butter or nuts = a silver dollar or a walnut

Use the **Lizard Brain Treat** when you are:

- anxious, irritated, or agitated.
- anticipating something that makes you anxious, irritated and/or agitated.
- not hungry after waking in the morning. Try having nuts and juice on your bed stand and consume the treat prior to getting out of bed.
- hungry, having gone too long (more than 4 hours) without eating.
- having 3 AM "committee meetings": waking at 3 AM and being sure that sleep won't come for 2 hours.

Optimize Your Brain



Three Day of Ridiculous Amounts of Protein: Protein Every Three Hours

- 7 AM Breakfast: (14 grams of protein) within an hour of waking
Two eggs, 1 piece of toast, one apple or pear
- 10AM Snack: (6-7 grams of protein)
1/4 cup of nuts: almonds, peanuts, cashews, and hazelnuts
Or 1/4 cup cottage cheese
Or 2 TBS of nut butter-peanut, almond, and/or cashew
- 12 to 1PM Lunch: (21 grams of protein) meat the size of a deck of cards
This can be a sandwich, wrap, salad, or soup.
Plus 1 cup of veggies or 1 cup of whole real grain-brown rice, quinoa, and bulgur
Be sure that there is a little veggie fat- avocado, nut oil and/or olive oil.
- 3 pm Snack: (6-7 grams of protein)
1/4 cup of nuts-almonds, peanuts, cashews, and hazelnuts
Or 1/4 cup cottage cheese
Or 2 TBS of nut butter-peanut, almond, and/or cashew
- 6 PM Dinner: (21 grams of protein) meat the size of a deck of cards
This can be a sandwich, wrap, salad, or soup.
Plus 1 cup of veggies or 1 cup of whole real grain-brown rice, quinoa, and/or bulgur
Be sure that there is a little veggie fat- avocado, nut oil and/or olive oil.
- Before Bed: 1-2 slices of turkey or meat