

New study reveals higher protein breakfast may help dieters stay on track

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A new study published online today in the *British Journal of Nutrition* found that timing of dietary protein intake affects feelings of fullness throughout the day. The study concluded that when people ate high-quality protein foods, from sources such as eggs and lean Canadian bacon, for breakfast they had a greater sense of sustained fullness throughout the day compared to when more protein was eaten at lunch or dinner

"There is a growing body of research which supports eating high-quality protein foods when dieting to maintain a sense of fullness," said Wayne W. Campbell, PhD, study author and professor of Foods and Nutrition at Purdue University. "This study is particularly unique in that it looked at the timing of protein intake and reveals that when you consume more protein may be a critical piece of the equation."

A Closer Look at the Study

The study included overweight or obese men who ate a reduced calorie diet. The diet consisted of two variations of protein intakes, both which were within federal nutrition recommendations: normal protein intake (11-14 percent of calories) or increased protein (18-25 percent of calories). The researchers tested the effect of consuming the additional protein at specific meals – breakfast, lunch or dinner – or spaced evenly throughout the day.

Purdue researchers found that the feeling of fullness was greatest and most sustained throughout the day when the additional protein, from eggs and lean Canadian bacon, was eaten at breakfast – versus lunch or dinner.

Additional Research

This study adds to a growing body of research on the benefits of eating high-quality protein for weight management. Recent research provides further evidence to support the findings of this study:

-- A study published online last month in the *International Journal of Obesity* found that eating two eggs for breakfast, as part of a reduced-calorie diet, helped overweight adults lose more weight and feel more energetic than those who ate a bagel breakfast of equal calories.

-- A Purdue University study published in a 2007 issue of *Obesity*, a scientific journal, revealed that a calorie-restricted diet with additional protein resulted in retained post-meal feelings of fullness and improved overall mood. The same study also found that a higher level of protein intake was more effective in maintaining lean body mass during weight loss.

Making the Most of Breakfast

The authors of the *British Journal of Nutrition* study note that most Americans typically consume a relatively small amount of protein at breakfast – only about 15 percent of their total daily protein intake.

Additionally, consumer research by the International Food Information Council shows that 92 percent of Americans cite breakfast as the most important meal of the day, however less than half (46 percent) eat

breakfast seven days per week.

"It strikes me that there is a real opportunity to increase protein intake at breakfast to see a meaningful impact on people's weight loss efforts," said Keith Ayooob, EdD, RD, FADA, a nutritionist and associate professor of pediatrics at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

"Many people are caught in a boring breakfast rut, or say they simply don't have enough time to eat in the morning, but with a little planning, breakfast can easily be one of the most fulfilling meals of the day."

Ayooob provides the following tips for easy, high-quality protein based breakfasts:

-- Cook Once, Eat Twice: Use last night's leftover vegetables as fillings for an easy-to-prepare omelet ready to eat in less than two minutes. In addition to the leftovers, fill the omelet with lean Canadian bacon and low-fat cheese for additional flavor and protein punch.

-- Wake Up Right: Start the day off right with a balanced breakfast that pairs high-quality protein, like yogurt or low-fat dairy, with healthy carbohydrates, such as those found in fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

-- On The Go: For a breakfast meal you can take with you in the morning, try a wrap! Add lean Canadian bacon and low-fat cheese and any other preferred toppings to scrambled eggs, and then spoon into a warm whole wheat tortilla. Fold the tortilla, cut it in half and take it to go.

-- Family Fun: Make breakfast fun for the whole family by serving up creative dishes, like green eggs and ham. Simply add spinach to scrambled eggs and serve with ham for a fun and easy dish that the whole family can help prepare.

Source: The Egg Nutrition News Bureau

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