

Both high-protein and normal-protein diets are effective for T2D management, study finds

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New findings from the University of Alabama at Birmingham indicate that the type of protein in the diet is not as important as the overall amount of weight loss for those with type 2 diabetes.

In a study published in the journal *Obesity*, 106 adults with T2D were randomly assigned to either the high-protein or normal-protein [diet](#) for 52 weeks. Both diets were energy-restricted. The [high-protein diet](#) included recommendations to include lean beef in the diet, while the normal-protein diet instructed participants to refrain from eating any red meats. The team of researchers found that both a high-protein diet (40% of total calories from protein) and a moderate-protein diet (21% of total calories from protein) were effective in improving glucose control, [weight loss](#) and body composition in people with type 2 diabetes.

Lead author James O. Hill, professor with the UAB Department of Nutrition Sciences and director of the UAB Nutrition Obesity Research Center, and co-author Drew Sayer, Ph.D., with the UAB Department of Family and Community Medicine, say that in this context of comparing two overall healthy dietary patterns that differ in the amounts of dietary protein and carbohydrate, as well as the inclusion/exclusion of lean, minimally processed beef, the results here show an individual can have some flexibility to choose a dietary pattern that most closely matches their preferences and that they are mostly like to stick with in the long term.

In the multi-site, randomized controlled trial, 71 study participants followed a higher-protein diet with four or more 4- to 6-ounce servings of lean beef per week (as the only source of [red meat](#)) or a normal-protein diet with no red meat, for 52 weeks. The high-protein diet was composed of 40% protein, 32% carbohydrate and 28% fat of [total energy](#)—while the normal-protein diet was composed of 21% protein, 53% carbohydrate and 26% fat of total energy (which is higher in protein than the average American diet, with [protein](#) intake averaging

14-16% of total energy).

All participants had T2D and followed the State of Slim weight management program, with both diets being reduced in calories and limited to food lists for each phase of the SOS program. In addition, participants worked up to exercising up to 70 minutes per day, six days per week.

More information: Julianne G. Clina et al, High- and normal-protein diets improve body composition and glucose control in adults with type 2 diabetes: a randomized trial, *Obesity* (2023). [DOI: 10.1002/oby.23815](https://doi.org/10.1002/oby.23815)

Provided by University of Alabama at Birmingham

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