

# HEALTH & WELLNESS TIPS

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## Nutrition: Protein

When we think of protein, some version the truism often comes to mind: "you need protein to gain muscle" or "protein makes you strong." In fact, the amino acids that make up protein are also responsible for building cartilage, skin, hair, blood and bones. Many protein-rich foods are good sources of vitamins B and E, magnesium, iron and zinc as well.

The USDA food pyramid includes meat, poultry, fish, seeds, beans and nuts as proteins. Are these foods the perfect body-building nutrients? Yes and no. Because the body does not store protein as it does fat deposits, we must constantly replenish our protein. If we do not, our muscles will diminish as a source of that protein. We will weaken and compromise our health.



The "danger" of protein-rich foods is twofold. First, many popular sources of meat protein are too fatty or processed. Examples include regular ground beef, hot dogs, pork chops, chicken with the skin, and many lunch meats. If these foods are sources of protein, they may supply unwanted saturated fat and raise

LDL "bad" cholesterol which is a risk factor in heart disease. Alternative proteins like fish, egg whites, nuts, seeds, and lean cuts of meat and poultry can help avoid this dilemma.

The second challenge is the danger of too much protein to those with compromised kidney and liver function. For those individuals, the stress of organs filtering protein-rich foods may lead to the need to monitor all types of protein consumption.

As with so many other foods, we may all benefit from a policy of moderation. Look for more nutrition information at the USDA website [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov).

## Eat your fruits & veggies?

Vegetables are low in fat and calories and do not contain cholesterol. Fruits likewise provide fiber and important nutrients. Both fruits and vegetables are critical to a healthy diet. But what exactly is the difference between a fruit and a vegetable?

A fruit is the seed-bearing part of a plant. The often edible pulp of the fruit typically surrounds the seed(s) as in an apple, orange, peach, cherry, etc.

A vegetable is any edible part of the plant other than the fruit including the stalk, root, stem and leaf. Think of asparagus, radishes, broccoli and lettuce.

Botanically speaking then, cucumbers, avocados, tomatoes, and peppers are all fruits because they contain seeds. However, for the purposes of diet we commonly classify only the sweet plant products as fruits. By either definition, remember to eat your fruits and veggies!

### Your "Vitamin C" IQ:

Rank from highest to lowest  
(mg of Vitamin C/100g)

1. Strawberry \_\_\_\_\_
2. Watermelon \_\_\_\_\_
3. Grapefruit \_\_\_\_\_
4. Tomato \_\_\_\_\_
5. Peach \_\_\_\_\_
6. Papaya \_\_\_\_\_
7. Guava \_\_\_\_\_
8. Orange \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS: Guava 183mg, Papaya 62mg, Strawberry 57mg, Orange 53mg, Grapefruit 34mg, Tomato 19mg, Watermelon 10mg, Peach 7mg  
See [www.naturalhub.com](http://www.naturalhub.com) for more Vitamin C info

