

# Smart Choices

## Nutrition News for Seniors

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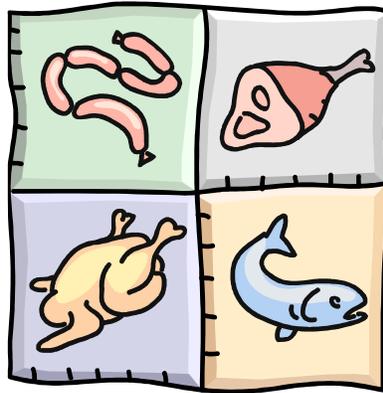
### Power Up with Protein

Protein is one of the major nutrients needed by your body. It is used primarily to build, repair and maintain all your body tissues. Proteins are made up of a combination of amino acids, which are also known as the building blocks of proteins.

Proteins also serve as a source of energy for the body with one gram of protein providing 4 calories. Proteins also play a role in being a basic part of enzymes and hormones.

Proteins can be grouped into two categories: complete and incomplete. Complete proteins contain all the essential amino acids in the amount needed to form proteins. Complete proteins are found in animal products. Incomplete proteins are missing one or more of the essential amino acids and are found in plant food sources.

According to the Harvard School of Public Health, the average healthy adult needs 8 grams of protein for every 20 pounds of body weight. The elderly, children, people who are disabled or recovering from trauma, pregnant and nursing women need higher levels of protein. Most Americans get more than adequate protein in their diet. A



- Eggs
- Soy Products
- Quinoa

Incomplete protein sources of foods include:

- Grains
- Beans
- Nuts and Seeds
- Vegetables

person with protein deficiency over time can see hair loss, muscle weakness, delayed wound healing, and an impaired immune system.

As a senior adult you may not be getting enough protein in your diet for a variety of reasons. You may not have the appetite you once had and are not eating enough to get adequate protein. You may also be experiencing mouth problems that prevent you from being able to chew some protein foods. You should speak to your doctor if you think you need a higher amount than the recommendation.

Good sources of complete proteins include:

- Beef
- Poultry
- Fish
- Milk and other dairy products

People who follow a vegetarian eating plan have to combine incomplete protein sources together in order to get all the essential amino acids needed every day which are provided by complete protein foods. For example, combining rice and beans, two plant sources, will provide a complete protein.

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- Bean and Rice Burritos Recipe
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# Bean and Rice Burritos



## Ingredients:

- 2 cups cooked rice
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cups cooked kidney beans or one 15 ounce can, drained
- 8 (10 inch) flour tortillas
- 1/2 cup salsa
- 1/2 cup grated cheese

## Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 300 degrees.
2. Peel the onion, and chop it into small pieces.
3. Drain the liquid from the cooked (or canned) kidney beans.
4. Mix the rice, chopped onion, and beans in a bowl.
5. Put each tortilla on a flat surface.
6. Put 1/2 cup of the rice and bean mix in the middle of each tortilla.
7. Fold the sides of the tortilla to hold the rice and beans.
8. Put each filled tortilla (burrito) in the baking pan.
9. Bake for 15 minutes.
10. While the burritos are baking, grate 1/2 cup cheese.
11. Pour the salsa over the baked burritos. Add cheese.
12. Serve the burritos warm.

**Cost:** Per Recipe: \$ 3.02 Per Serving: \$ 0.38

**Source:** The Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Program

| Nutrition Facts                              |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Serving Size 1 burrito, 1/8 of recipe (187g) |                             |
| Servings Per Container                       |                             |
| Amount Per Serving                           |                             |
| <b>Calories 370</b>                          | <b>Calories from Fat 70</b> |
| % Daily Value*                               |                             |
| <b>Total Fat 8g</b>                          | <b>12%</b>                  |
| Saturated Fat 3g                             | 15%                         |
| Trans Fat 0g                                 |                             |
| <b>Cholesterol 5mg</b>                       | <b>2%</b>                   |
| <b>Sodium 560mg</b>                          | <b>23%</b>                  |
| <b>Total Carbohydrate 60g</b>                | <b>20%</b>                  |
| Dietary Fiber 5g                             | 20%                         |
| Sugars 2g                                    |                             |
| <b>Protein 13g</b>                           |                             |
| Vitamin A 2%                                 | Vitamin C 4%                |
| Calcium 15%                                  | Iron 20%                    |

\*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

|                    | Calories  | 2,000   | 2,500   |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Total Fat          | Less Than | 65g     | 80g     |
| Saturated Fat      | Less Than | 20g     | 25g     |
| Cholesterol        | Less Than | 300mg   | 300 mg  |
| Sodium             | Less Than | 2,400mg | 2,400mg |
| Total Carbohydrate |           | 300g    | 375g    |
| Dietary Fiber      |           | 25g     | 30g     |

Calories per gram:  
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

## Do You Need a Protein or Amino Acid Supplement?

Normal, healthy people never need protein or amino acid supplements. It is safest to obtain, lysine, tryptophan and all other amino acids from eating protein-rich foods. Use of amino acids as dietary supplements is inappropriate especially for:

- ◆ Elderly people
- ◆ All women of childbearing age
- ◆ Pregnant or nursing women
- ◆ Infants, children and teens
- ◆ Smokers
- ◆ People on low-protein diets

## What's the Purpose of SNAP?

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP is about helping people with limited incomes improve their nutrition for better health and disease prevention. The program is available to all eligible persons.

Food Stamp coupons have been replaced by an electronic SNAP card that looks and works just like a typical debit or credit card used by any grocery shopper. No one but you and the grocery check-out clerk will know you are using SNAP. This program can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact 1-888-LA HELPU or visit [www.dss.state.la.us](http://www.dss.state.la.us).



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References: Nutrition NOW, Understanding Nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health