

clover food lab

Michelle here!

First off, I am not a dietician or a nutritionist, though we are dreaming up some fun collabs with folks in the nutrition field soon.

I ~~am~~, **however** an avid runner, and a vegetarian. Thus I have a lot of experience trying to figure out how to get enough protein in my diet.

Turns out, PROTEIN. IS. EVERYWHERE.

Legumes, nuts, seeds, and even broccoli! Before we get into where we can find protein, let's start with...

What is Protein?

Protein is found throughout the body—in muscle, bone, skin, hair, etc. It is made from twenty-plus basic building blocks called amino acids and, once digested, it makes up the enzymes that power many chemical reactions and the hemoglobin that carries oxygen in your blood.

These processes are important for building and restoring muscles, maintaining energy levels, stabilizing your mood, and basically everything else vital to human function.

In athletes it's especially important for muscle recovery, repair, and injury prevention (since muscles are made up of mostly protein).

So little-old-me always has protein on my mind—and based on survey responses, so do all of you.

And again I say: PROTEIN. IS. EVERYWHERE! And plants make some delicious protein that's really good for your body long-term. Of course you can get tons of protein from things like Impossible Meat, tofu, seitan, tempeh and the like, but we'll save those for a future blast.



Me after the Newport Marathon - powered by a quinoa bowl riddled with roasted veggies!

LEGUMES

LENTILS

The plant that packs the biggest protein punch is actually the humble little lentil! 1 cup of cooked lentils has 18g of protein! That's almost as much as a similar quantity of pork! Plus, it's full of fiber so it keeps you full longer. It's also very low in fat so you can feel free to prepare it with some healthy fats for a richer culinary experience.

We use Timeless Foods lentils a ton across restaurants and meal boxes. Add some "ground beef" lentils to your next taco night or mix them into a salad anytime.

They're really simple to prepare, too. Use a 2:1 water to lentil ratio. Bring the water to a boil, add the lentils, and then turn down to a low simmer and let cook for about 30 minutes. Different lentils cook at different rates so you can consult the package for more exact instructions but that's how easy it is! Drain any excess water and season.

PEAS, BLACK BEANS, KIDNEY BEANS

Peas, black beans, and kidney beans contain about 16g of protein per cooked cup. They are also so versatile that they're easy to sneak into your regular diet with very little effort. Prepare a big quart of them at the beginning of the week, then sprinkle them into recipes here and there. Add some to a salad, mix into your rice, sprinkle over a taco, make a black bean burger, cook them up with your favorite greens and some garlic, or add to a soup.

MY FAVORITE: THE CHICKPEA!

The last legume I'll get into before we move on is my favorite one: The chickpea. Clocking in at about 15g of protein per cup, chickpeas are my protein saviors. Why? Hummus. I put hummus on everything. A deli container of silky hummus is my top-ordered item at Clover (sorry sandwiches!)

Nuts & Seeds

Seeds actually provide more protein than nuts. Hemp seeds and pumpkin seeds are the top two in terms of protein, and they can be easily sprinkled into a salad or grain bowl. You can also add them to granola, whether you're making your own, or buying ours at CloverROW.

Nuts are also really high in protein! Though a little higher in calories, they're an easy snack, a delicious garnish (especially toasted), and a perfect mix-in for salads. Also, a nice addition to sweets!

VEGETABLES

You probably already knew about nuts, seeds, and legumes. I still wanted to mention them, because they are such good protein options, with more fiber and vitamins than your average piece of meat. But surprise! Vegetables also have protein too!!



- A cup of whole wheat flour has 16 grams of protein
- Brussels sprouts have 5.6 grams of protein per cup.
 - A shaved brussels sprout salad=your new protein supplement. Yum.
- Potatoes have 4.5 grams per medium potato. An excuse to eat fries? Yes.
- Broccoli, Asparagus, Avocados, and Yellow Sweet Corn all clock in at 4 grams.

