

## Did You Know Plant-based Proteins Can Be Complete?



Your body needs protein to build, repair and maintain your cells and tissues such as muscles and organs. Blood, bones, enzymes and hormones also depend on protein.

How much protein you need depends on your age, activity level, muscle mass and health. About 10 percent to 35 percent of your calories should be protein. For someone who

eats about 2,000 calories a day, that range would be 200 (10 percent) to 700 calories (35 percent) – or 50 to 175 grams.

A “complete protein” contains all nine essential amino acids. The body naturally makes some amino acids, and others come from food. People usually think of meat as the main source of protein, but some plants such as soy beans, quinoa,

amaranth, chia and hemp seeds also provide complete proteins. Only some plants have complete protein, so it’s important to eat a variety to complete the amino-acid chain.

Studies show that plant-protein diets can help reduce inflammation and the risk of cancer and heart disease. Plus, they’re lower in calories.

### High-protein, plant-based foods

- **Soy products.** Tofu can replace meat. Edamame adds protein to casseroles, soups and salads, and is a great snack steamed or dried.
- **Lentils.** These are great in soups, stews, salads and rice.
- **Chickpeas and beans (black, kidney, pinto).** These make tasty hummus and are great in soups, stews, chili, salads and casseroles.
- **Nutritional yeast.** This is a great topping for pasta dishes, soups or salads.
- **Nuts and nut butters.** They’re great as a snack or lunch with fruits and veggies.
- **Quinoa.** This can be used instead of rice or pasta, tossed with salads or used in casseroles.
- **Chia or hemp seeds.** These are great in smoothies or pudding.

Resources: [eatright.org](http://eatright.org); [cancer.org](http://cancer.org) [heart.org](http://heart.org)

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>2/3 cup (55g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g	<b>10%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	<b>5%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 160mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g	<b>13%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g	<b>14%</b>
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	<b>20%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

## Reading a Food Label

Food labels have evolved with our eating habits over the last 20 years. Reading labels is a great way to be more aware of what you are putting into your body.

The label information is for one serving. If the package has two servings and you eat it all, you've doubled your calories as well as fat, sugar and sodium.

Here's what you'll see. Calories are darker and bolder, and the serving

size is larger and bolder. If a container has multiple servings, it will say so.

The **calories from fat** show saturated and/or trans fats in the food. Minimize or avoid these because they're linked to increased risk of heart disease.

The amount of **added sugars** is also new. Less than 10 percent of your daily calories should come from added sugars. Look for sugars like brown sugar, molasses, high fructose corn syrup, agave nectar, honey, sucrose, etc.

The percent **Daily Value** (DV) can help you decide if a food fits into your daily meal plan. The DV is a percentage based on 2,000 calories a day. Your needs may be different. According to [eatright.org](http://eatright.org), women 31 to 50 years old need 1,800 calories for a sedentary lifestyle, and 2,200 calories if they're active.

### Tips for Using the Nutrition Label

1. Pay attention to the serving size.
2. Look at fiber content. The recommended DV is 25 grams for women and 38 grams for men.
3. Check out the added sugars.
4. Check the labels for saturated and trans fats. Less than 10 percent of your total calories should be from these.
5. Avoid or limit foods high in sodium. The recommendation for healthy adults is 2,300 mg per day. If you have high blood pressure, keep sodium to 1,500 mg or less.

**Resources:** [eatright.org](http://eatright.org); [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)

## Hummus and Veggie Wrap

Serves 1

### Ingredients:

- 1 (8-inch) whole grain tortilla
- ¼ cup hummus
- ¼ cup shredded lettuce (or baby spinach leaves)
- 2 tablespoons chopped walnuts, toasted
- 2 tablespoons chopped or roasted red bell peppers from a jar
- 2 tablespoons coarsely shredded carrots
- 1 medium cucumber, peeled and sliced



### Directions

Spread the hummus over the bottom two-thirds of the tortilla. (Leave the top bare for wrapping.) Top the hummus with lettuce and vegetables. Roll up tightly, starting at the bottom. Wrap tightly and refrigerate until ready to eat.

Recipe courtesy of [oldwayspt.org](http://oldwayspt.org) and for nutritional information [click here](#).

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