



Is There Such a Thing as Too Much Protein?

In short, yes there is. The USDA and HHS update the Dietary Guidelines for Americans every 5 years. The recommended range for protein is between 10-30% of your calories, often closer to 30-35% in bariatric patients. For example, if you are consuming 1500 kcals per day, your protein recommendation is 37.5-131 grams per day. The Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for protein is 0.8g/kg of ideal body weight, which is how much the body needs on average. The ideal protein goal after weight loss surgery (WLS) is 60-80 gm per day.

Functions of Protein:

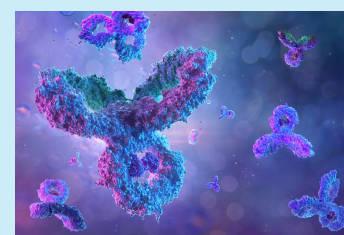
- Supports regulation of DNA and RNA
- Transports essential molecules around the body
- Antibodies help with immune support
- Makes up enzymes, which catalyzes biochemical reactions in the body
- Muscle growth and maintenance
- Literally supports your body

Getting sufficient protein intake does not mean the amount of animal protein needs to increase. Plant-based protein can also be high in protein as well. It is very important to avoid high fat meat and high fat diets, such as keto. Regularly consuming red meat or meat with skin could negatively impact cholesterol levels due to the saturated fat content. The best protein sources are lean meats, eggs, fish, low fat dairy, soy, nuts, seeds, beans, & lentils. The body can only absorb so much protein in one sitting and should not exceed 40 grams per meal. It's better to divide your protein intake more evenly throughout the day into 15-30 gram increments. (continued on page 2)



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Staff Spotlight

Meet Vanessa!

She is our Bariatric Coordinator.



Favorite food: steak or mild buffalo wings

Favorite vacation spot: Lately, I love Florida and its beaches, I'm also loving TN

Have you ever met anyone famous? I have met El Tri, he is a Spanish rock celebrity, I also saw Monique at the gym once but was too star-struck to say hello

Fun fact: I follow the 5-year plan, I like to make sure I continue to evolve as a person every year and accomplish goals I have set aside for myself. I have 3 kids and I have explained the importance of evolving. Another Fun Fact - I quote movies

Best advice you've been given? Walk by faith, not by sight

Favorite TV show - The Sopranos and Dexter are at the top of the list

What is your favorite part of working at Atlanta Bariatrics?

My favorite part of working at Atlanta Bariatrics is being a part of the initial journey before surgery, It is a positive life-changing experience and I am honored to be a part of it, another favorite is seeing patients at their annual visits and seeing the confidence take over

Too much Protein (continued)

Consistently consuming more protein than the RDA is not recommended and can increase risk for renal disease, coronary artery disease, excessive calcium in the urine, increased risk of kidney stone formation, liver disease and some cancers especially colon cancer. If following a high protein diet, it could lead to overconsumption of calories and cause weight gain. Protein cannot be stored by the body and will be converted into fat for storage. Daily protein should not exceed 1.5g/kg per day after WLS. In addition, producing animal proteins is harder on the environment by utilizing more resources and producing greenhouse gasses.



Instant Pot



The Instant Pot has boomed in popularity over the past decade. This one appliance can function as a pressure cooker, a rice cooker, a slow cooker, skillet, and a steamer. Some can even air fry or sous vide cook. They come in a variety of sizes, so verify how many quarts it is to see if it is appropriate for your family size. Usually the pressure cooker feature is sought after because meals can be cooked in half the time. When setting the pressure cooker, there are 2 options: natural release or quick release which refers to the speed steam comes out, so they are noisy appliances. Be careful when using quick release because hot steam will come out fast. Electric pressure cookers are a lot safer than their stovetop counterparts. Make sure to thoroughly read the manual prior to the first use. There are several modules and other brands available, so compare the different features to ensure it meets your needs and is user friendly to you. They are not ideal for making seafood, cake, or pasta.

Meal ideas for a Pressure Cooker:

- Taco soup
- White chicken chili
- Pot roast with carrots, parsnips, leeks, and baby red potatoes
- Hard boiled eggs
- Steel cut oatmeal

Featured Mindfulness Apps:

Balance: Meditation & sleep- The goal is to improve sleep, stress, performance and more. After answering questions, a personalized audio library of meditations is assembled for you. Can track your skills progress too. On Apple and Android. Has in app purchases.

Headspace- Learn to improve different areas of your life through science backed meditation and mindfulness tools - focus, move, wake up, sleep, and meditate. Has access to coaching, therapy, and Employee Assistance Program. Offers a free trial. Fees range from \$6-13 per month.

Instant Pot Recipe: Salsa Chicken



INGREDIENTS

For the Salsa Chicken:

- 1 tablespoon olive oil or avocado oil
- 1 cup diced yellow onion
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 (14-16 ounce) jar of your favorite salsa
- 1 (15 ounce) can no salt added black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 (15 ounce) can no salt added sweet corn, drained (may sub 1 ½ cups frozen corn)
- ½ cup low-sodium chicken broth or water
- 2 tablespoons taco seasoning
- 1 teaspoon fine salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts

For the Cilantro-Lime Crema

- 1 cup low-fat sour cream
- 2–3 tablespoons lime juice (juice of 1 lime) + ½ teaspoon lime zest
- ¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves
- ½ teaspoon honey
- 1 small garlic clove or ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ⅛ teaspoon fine salt

Optional for serving: serve the salsa chicken over cooked brown rice or cauliflower rice or in a lettuce wrap, top with sliced avocado, cilantro-lime crema, thinly sliced jalapeno, lime wedges, fresh chopped cilantro, pickled red onion, and a side of blue corn tortilla chips

DIRECTIONS:

- Select the 'saute' function on the Instant Pot. Once hot, add the oil and diced onion. Stir occasionally, cooking for 3-4 minutes or until onions start to become tender. Add the garlic and continue to cook for 1 minute, stirring occasionally to prevent garlic from burning.
- Add salsa, black beans, corn, broth, taco seasoning, salt, and pepper to the Instant Pot. Stir then place the chicken on top and gently press them into the salsa mixture.
- Place the lid on the Instant Pot, lock it into place, and make sure the vent is in the sealed position.
- Set Instant Pot to 'High Pressure' setting then set the cooking time for 10 minutes.
- Once cooking is completed, allow natural releasing of pressure for 3-4 minutes then switch the valve to 'vent'.
- When all of the pressure releases and the lid unlocks, remove the chicken and shred the chicken with two forks. Toss chicken back into the pot to coat with sauce.
- To make the cilantro-lime crema: Add the ingredients to a small blender cup or small food processor and blend until smooth.
- Assemble the bowls with suggested serving options.

Recipe adapted from: <https://therealfooddietitians.com/instant-pot-salsa-chicken/>

NURSE'S CORNER

Varicose/Spider Veins

What are varicose veins and spider veins?

Varicose veins are a very common problem, generally appearing as twisting, bulging grape-like cords on the legs. They can occur anywhere from the groin to the ankle. Spider veins are smaller than varicose veins although the conditions are similar. Spider veins appear blue or red and are usually located close to the surface of the skin.

These veins can be caused by venous insufficiency. This is a condition where the valves in the small superficial veins grow weak and allow for blood to back up in the lower legs. Overtime, the venous insufficiency can cause the veins to enlarge or spread. It can also cause symptoms such as heaviness in the lower legs, fatigue, pain, burning or itching, and even swelling.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms or have visible veins that you would like treated, there are non-invasive treatments available! Reach out to us today for a free vein consult with Dr. Johnson.

Featured Mindfulness Apps:

Healthy Minds

Program- Develop skills to create a healthier and happier you based on neuroscience. Utilizes podcast style learning and active meditations. On Apple and Android

Bloom: CBT Therapy & Journal-

Check out the self guided therapy app that utilizes AI and CBT. Their library contains over 700 sessions to help with everything from burnout to anxiety. Is a secure platform. Offers a free trial and has a subscription fee. Only on Apple.

QUICK MEALS DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

As we come to the end of the year, there may not be a lot of time for meal prepping with holiday activities and work deadlines. Below are some easy ideas so you can maintain your health goals while keeping up with a busy schedule.

Breakfast:

- Low fat, low sugar greek yogurt parfait w/ fruit and chia seeds
- Overnight oats or instant oatmeal (make sure is less than 5gm of added sugar)
- Whole wheat toast with sliced banana and natural peanut butter
- Cottage cheese pancakes with sugar free syrup. Can make a batch for the week
- Egg bites
- Turkey or chicken sausage with fruit
- Whole wheat bagel thin w/ cottage cheese and sliced tomatoes on top

Lunch and Dinner:

- Grocery store salad kits + low fat protein
- Frozen meals: Healthy Choice power bowls, Lean cuisine, Smartones, Tattooed Chef, Life Cuisine
- Canned/packs of tuna and chicken. Could make tuna/chicken salad in a wrap, sandwich thin or eat with wheat thins. May add to a salad.
- Hummus w/ raw vegetables and a few triscuits
- Wraps- using deli turkey or chicken, lettuce, tomato, shredded carrots, low fat cheese slice, mustard, and low- fat mayo
- Air fryer chicken or salmon and pair with frozen steamer vegetable packs
- Check at the deli and meat section of your grocery store. Often there are ready to eat salads and meals in the deli or ready to cook meals in the meat section.
- Tacos made w/ lean ground beef or shredded chicken. Topped with red onions, cilantro, salsa

- Spaghetti- use whole wheat spaghetti noodles or chickpea pasta or red lentil pasta w/ low sugar tomato sauce, frozen turkey meatballs. Could add vegetables like zoodles, onions, mushrooms, bell peppers or have a side salad

- Butternut squash stuffed with your favorite grain, veggies/fruits– try quinoa, low-sugar dried cranberries, chick peas, kale, orange juice and your favorite seasonings.



- Burrito bowl- canned low sodium beans, canned corn, salsa, tomato, onion, avocado, bell pepper, and microwavable 90 second brown rice or quinoa

- Turkey and black bean chili or White bean chicken chili

- Chicken and vegetables with pesto

- Homemade soups in the crockpot. Could use beans and lentils for protein

- Chicken and vegetable stir-fry using whatever vegetables available in the fridge and pantry. Could try Eat Smart vegetable stir fry in the produce section.

- Pulled BBQ chicken on a whole wheat bun. Double check the added sugar content in the BBQ sauce.

- Make hamburgers in the air fryer. Can be done with various premade patties from lean beef, salmon, turkey, or veggie. Use a whole wheat bun and don't forget to include vegetable toppings.

- Mexican pineapple and black bean stuffed sweet potato

Other Tips:

- Use precut fruit, veggie trays, low sodium canned vegetables, canned fruit in 100% fruit juice, or frozen vegetables for convenience

- Quick protein options: canned beans, Tyson grilled and ready fully cooked chicken strips, boiled eggs, low fat cheese, unsalted nuts, cooked and ready to shrimp

- Crockpot meals are fast. Just dump the ingredients in the morning and come home to a finished meal

- Pressure cookers and air fryers can have dinner ready in the push of a button with much less