

Protein and the elderly



The importance of protein and calories for older people.

Why is protein important for the older person?

- Normal changes that occur with ageing include loss of muscle mass and strength which is associated with increased frailty, disability, and therefore loss of independence¹
- Diet, particularly adequate protein, in combination with exercise can limit this loss of muscle mass
- A higher protein intake is associated with greater bone density, slower rate of muscle loss and improved health outcomes and physical performance.^{2,3}

What are the consequences of a poor protein intake?

An inadequate protein intake is associated with:⁴

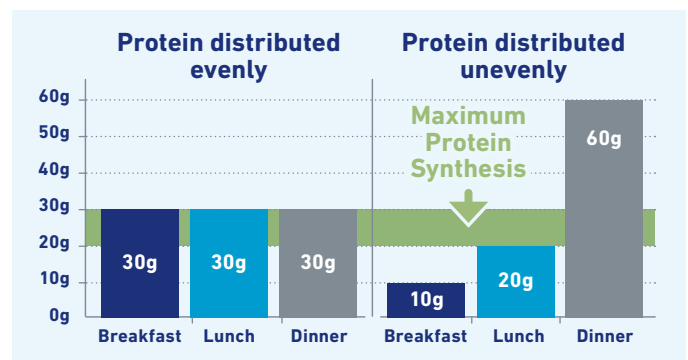
- Reduced rate of wound healing
- Increased risk of infection
- Reduced muscle mass
- Increased risk of fractures
- Functional decline.



Low lean body mass (LBM) is a strong predictor of mortality in older adults. BMI is not a good indicator of LBM.⁵

How much protein do older people need?

- The recommended dietary intake (RDI) for protein for older adults is 25% higher than for younger adults
- Many older people in aged care facilities do not meet the RDI for protein⁶
- Evidence shows that protein should be spread evenly over the day aiming for 20-30g per meal.⁷



What about calories?

Providing enough calories is important to achieve weight gain and to make sure dietary protein is used for maintaining muscle mass. However, just adding calories e.g. with butter, cream, full cream milk, won't help residents to meet their protein requirements.

A study of food fortification in a UK nursing home found that adding these types of foods **increased energy intake** and body weight but made no difference to protein intake.⁸

	Control Mean (95% CI)	Intervention
Energy intake change (kJ)	-151 (-887 to 590)	556 (-238 to 1351)
Protein intake change (g)	0.1 (-7.3 to 7.5)	0.1 (-7.6 to 7.7)
Weight change (kg)	-0.2 (-1.1 to 0.6)	1.3 (0.14 to 2.41)

How can frail older people increase their protein intake?

- **Improving food choices:** including a protein source in all meals and snacks, for example dairy products, meat, chicken, fish or eggs
- **Fortifying food:** adding nutritional supplements such as SUSTAGEN® Hospital Formula Active Neutral Flavour to foods and fluids
- Oral Nutrition Supplements between meals or on a med pass program.

Ultimately older people tend to consume too little food to meet their protein requirements and thus supplementation between meals can be beneficial.⁹

Nestlé Health Science solutions to increase protein intake



SUSTAGEN® Hospital Formula Active - Neutral Flavour

- Nutritionally complete supplement
- Provides 225 kcal and 13.8g protein (25% energy) per serve
- Neutral flavour so it can be added to sweet and savoury food and fluids
- Mixes well with various foods.



BENEPROTEIN®

- High quality whey protein
- 6g protein per 7g scoop
- Adding 2 scoops to 200mL drink will provide an additional 12g protein
- Mixes easily into food and fluids
- Suitable for lactose intolerance.



RESOURCE® 2.0 + Fibre

- Nutritionally complete, ready to drink supplement
- 400 kcal, 5g fibre and 18g protein (18% energy) per 200mL serve
- 5 flavours limit taste fatigue and improve compliance
- Perfect for med pass program
- Fibre promotes healthy bowel function.



RESOURCE® Protein

- Nutritionally complete, ready to drink supplement
- 250 kcal and 18.8g (30% energy) protein per 200mL serve
- 4 flavours limit taste fatigue and improve compliance.



RESOURCE® 2.0

- Nutritionally complete, ready to drink supplement
- 475 kcal and 19.7g protein (17% energy) per 237mL serve
- Perfect for med pass program which is shown to assist with compliance and positive patient outcomes.

References: 1. Paddon-Jones D et al. AJCN 2008;87(suppl):1562S-65S 2. Nowson C et al. Nutrients 2015;7:6874-6899 3. Wolfe RR et al. Clinical Nutrition 2008;27:675-684
4. Dawson B et al. Nutr Diet 2008;65:151-156 5. Toss F et al. Age Ageing 2012;41:677-681 6. Woods JL et al. J Nutr Health Aging 2009;13(8):693-698
7. Bauer J et al. JAMDA 2013;14:542-559 8. Leslie W et al. J Hum Nutr Diet. 2013;26:387-394 9. Visvanathan R, Chapman I. Gastroenterol Clin Nutr America. 2009;38:393-409

Nutritional supplements can only be of assistance where dietary intake is inadequate. Please seek advice on your individual dietary needs from an Accredited Practising Dietitian or your healthcare professional. SUSTAGEN® Hospital Formula Active is a formulated meal replacement and cannot be used as a total diet replacement. Consume as part of a varied and balanced diet and healthy lifestyle. BENEPROTEIN®, RESOURCE® 2.0 + Fibre, RESOURCE® Protein and RESOURCE® 2.0 are food for special medical purposes specifically formulated for medical conditions where nutritional needs cannot be met through diet modification alone. Must use under medical supervision.

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