

Animal and Plant Protein Sources Are Not Equal

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✓ Fact Checked

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STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › Protein is the primary building block for muscle and muscle loss is associated with a loss of independence and risk of premature death. Data show that animal protein is more bioavailable and provides more essential amino acids than plant protein
- › The Dietary Guidelines for Americans uses an ounce-equivalent standard portion to compare nutritional content, which data suggest may not be accurate. The bioavailability of amino acids is an important consideration and one researcher suggests the data may call into question the recommendation to eat more plant-based foods
- › For multiple reasons, the push to eat more plant-based foods is not sustainable as it doesn't provide the needed nutrition and leads to nutritional deficiencies. Fake meat products are also metabolically hazardous, as they are created with vegetable fats and raise greenhouse gas emissions
- › Fake foods are the very definition of junk food. A society that relies on fake foods for nutrition can be easily controlled through the supply chain. A healthier choice for you and the environment is real, grass fed meat that has proven to produce a negative net total carbon footprint

Maintaining your muscle mass as you age is an integral part of staying healthy and independent. A 2023 study¹ evaluated protein intake in young and older adults, two populations that historically have challenges in consuming protein-based foods. The data indicated that not all protein sources offer the same health benefit.

After reaching your 40s, you can lose roughly 1% of muscle mass each year, which corresponds to a 1% to 3% reduction in strength.² Losing muscle is associated with a loss of independence in the elderly and a downward decline in health, including the risk of premature death.

Building muscle is a complex process that requires two vital foundational factors. The first is resistance training or muscle strengthening exercises that help to strengthen and build muscle. The second is protein that your body uses to build that muscle. It turns out that the debate over plant- versus meat-based diets must also include whether both diets can adequately feed muscle development.

You can determine your ideal protein intake by multiplying your lean body mass in pounds by 0.6 to determine the low range and 0.8 to determine the high range. Your lean body mass is what is left over after you subtract your body fat. So if you are 20% body fat your lean body mass would be your weight times 0.8.

All Protein Is Not Created Equal

Research scientists from Purdue University³ completed the study⁴ comparing 2-ounce equivalents of animal-based foods against plant-based sources. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans uses an ounce-equivalent (oz-eq) portion to compare nutritional content.

For example, a 1 oz-eq of protein is equal to one whole egg, 1 ounce of meat, a fourth-cup of beans or a half-ounce of nuts. Wayne Campbell, Ph.D., was the primary investigator and is a professor in the department of nutrition science at Purdue University.

He suggests that the basis for equating plant- and meat-based protein sources as equivalent means they have a nutritional content that is used similarly within the body, and yet this is not clear.⁵ In addition to the different nutrient content, including protein quality and quantity, there is also limited information about how the body processes different types of protein foods in a mixed meal.

The researchers were interested in analyzing this question in two populations. The first were younger adults who historically lack variety in their diet and the second were older adults whose diet may contain poor quality sources of protein despite their nutritional needs.

The researchers gathered 30 young adults and 25 older adults for an investigator-blinded, randomized crossover trial. Each participant completed four sessions during which they ate a meal with 2 oz-eq of either whole eggs, unprocessed pork, black beans or sliced almonds.

The researchers measured plasma essential amino acids at baseline, 30, 60, 120, 180, 240 and 300 minutes after eating. The data showed that the age of the participant did not affect the bioavailability of the essential amino acids in all four protein food groups tested. In both age groups, pork yielded greater essential amino acid bioavailability and pork and eggs yielded greater bioavailability than black beans and almonds.

The researchers concluded from the data that the oz-eq used by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans does not provide an equivalent amount of bioavailable essential amino acids in younger or older adults.

Gavin Connolly, Ph.D., was the clinical trials project manager and is a research associate in the department of nutrition science and gerontology at Purdue University. He notes that bioavailable essential amino acids are linked with the ability to build body protein or muscle and suggests, "This is an important consideration for muscle and whole-body health and physical function across the life course."⁶

The authors also suggest that the findings have public health nutrition guidance implications, and Campbell goes so far as to say, "These results are also pertinent to the DGA's recommendation to consume more plant-based foods."⁷

Push to Eat Green Is Not Sustainable

Data from this study are yet another indication that plant-based and lab-produced meat substitutes are not sustainable options. Even at an early age, children need protein.

Initially, this is supplied through breast milk, but once children move on to table food, there is a significant health benefit to adding whole foods to their diet, but not restricting them to a plant-based diet.

Although meat substitutes seek to look and taste like meat, they are not. One study⁸ of Polish children between the ages of 5 and 10 years analyzed body composition, cardiovascular risk and micronutrient status in children who were vegetarian and vegan as compared to omnivores.

The study claimed that the vegan diet was associated with a healthier cardiovascular risk profile based largely on lower levels of LDL cholesterol, which is **not a good indicator** of cardiovascular health.

Yet, these same children had an increased risk of nutritional deficiencies, lower bone mineral content and were shorter by about 3.15 centimeters or 1.2 inches. The researchers called this “concerning,” and wrote:⁹

“Our data suggest that restriction of animal-based foods could prevent children from achieving optimal height or bone mineral status and could lead to selected nutritional deficiencies. The shorter height of children consuming PBDs [plant-based diets] may have mixed implications for long-term health.”

Fake meat products are metabolically hazardous as they use vegetable fats to replace animal fats which are devoid of important vitamins and loaded with the dangerous omega-6 fat, **linoleic acid**. Although the push to eat fake food is reportedly to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect the environment, it is only a formula for disaster.

A 2022 study¹⁰ demonstrated that ultraprocessed foods already account for 36% to 45% of total diet-related biodiversity loss and up to one-third of total diet-related greenhouse gas emissions. Increasing the amount of processed fake food would only drive these percentages higher.

For all the lip service that's paid to “equity,” increasing consumption of processed foods like fake meat and lab-produced meat products will worsen economic inequalities as it

redirects money away from small farmers and independent homesteaders to transnational corporations that rely on underpaid workers.

Lab-Produced Meat Alternatives Are Junk Food

Additionally, fake meat products are the very definition of ultraprocessed foods, which are “formulations of ingredients, mostly of exclusive industrial use, that result from a series of industrial processes (hence ‘ultraprocessed’).”¹¹ According to this 2019 study, ultraprocessed foods already make up more than half of the energy consumed in high-income countries such as the U.K., Canada and the U.S.

By contrast only one-fifth to one-third of the total caloric intake in middle income countries came from ultraprocessed foods. Should globalists be successful in pushing a fake food diet, that percentage will rise precipitously.

In an effort to get you hooked on fake meat, the products are marketed as healthier and better for the environment. Added to this, Impossible Burger and Beyond Burger have nearly the same amount of fat and calories as real beef burgers. They also have more processed sodium and as a reporter at NBC News so succinctly pointed out:¹²

"If eating more realistic fake meat was about health, the offerings would be far lower in salt content, contain fewer calories and have a bit less dietary fat. None of them do, because the point was never to live up to the marketing of healthier eating. It was to simply act as a smooth replacement for the meat we worried about eating in our day-to-day lives."

If health is not the underlying reason for developing fake meat and plant-based products, what is? You need only consider how easily a society that depends on lab-produced and manufactured foods can be manipulated.

Although eating red meat has been vilified for decades as being unhealthy, cancer-promoting and artery-clogging, data¹³ from the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation showed weak evidence of any association between

unprocessed red meat and several health conditions, including hemorrhagic and ischemic stroke.

A 2019 paper¹⁴ demonstrated that if there were health benefits from eating less beef, they were minimal. The researchers concluded there was “low to very low” evidence that red meat triggered health problems. When you choose your meat for dinner, do you want grass fed beef that’s rich in vitamins and healthy fat, or a fake meat product with over 263 global patents?¹⁵

Grass Fed Meat Is a Far Better Choice

Some think of lab-created or vegetable-based meat substitutes as the lesser of two evils when compared to CAFO meat. Yet, as the featured study demonstrates, not all protein is created equal, and altering the natural order of the life cycle is not the answer.

As I've written in the past, White Oak Pastures in Bluffton, Georgia, has demonstrated through a commissioned analysis that **regeneratively grown beef** can produce a net total emission of carbon in the negative numbers as compared to CAFO and meat foodstuffs that hold multiple patents and are quantifiably junk food.

It's also worth noting that products that use soy, such as the Impossible Burger, are made with GMO soy that contains glyphosate. A healthier, more sustainable choice is grass fed beef, which also has a healthier ratio of dietary fat, and supports environmental health.

When given the choice, as we hope we will always be able to make, skip the fake meat alternative that is trying to disguise itself as healthy food and opt for real food that's being raised the right way instead.

Sources and References

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