

Wisconsin Wrestling Minimum Weight Project

BULKING UP WITH . . . PROTEIN???

Protein powders, special amino acid mixes, high protein shakes – all of these are becoming popular among athletes who want to either gain weight or tone their muscles. While most wrestlers are not interested in gaining weight, all are interested in improving their strength.

Are protein supplements needed to help gain strength? No!! Protein is an essential nutrient; however, a well-balanced diet can provide all the protein an athlete needs. Protein is the building block of the body. It is an important part of every cell. But extra protein does not build extra muscle or make a person stronger. Excess protein usually means excessive calories, and excessive calories mean extra weight.

If an athlete does not take in enough protein to meet his or her body's needs, the body will use its own muscle to meet its protein needs. This results in a decrease in muscle and a decrease in strength.

So, how much protein is enough?

Most athletes need anywhere from .4 to 1 gram of protein for each pound they weigh. For a 150 pound athlete, this means a daily protein intake from 60 to 160 grams. Why the wide range? Athletes who are still growing, restrict calorie intake, or train very heavily will have higher protein needs than those who are not growing, are not restricting their calorie intake and are in the "off-season."

Can you figure out your daily protein needs?

TAKE YOUR BODY WEIGHT (IN POUNDS) AND MULTIPLY IT BY:

- .4** if you are inactive, done growing and not on any special diet.
- .75** if you are moderately active (most high school athletes fall into this category).
- 1.0** if you spend the majority of your day doing hard physical work and are still growing.

**This will give you an estimate of how much protein
you should take in your diet on a daily basis.**

The following is a list of foods and their protein content. Can you use this list to figure out what foods you can eat to meet your daily protein needs?

FOOD	GRAMS OF PROTEIN
1 oz. of beef, chicken, fish or pork*	7
1 cup milk	8
1 slice of bread	2
1 cup of pasta or noodles	5
1 cup of bean soup	7
1/2 cup baked beans	6
1 medium size baked potato	4
1 cup lettuce	< 1
1/2 cup cooked carrots	< 1
1/2 cup raw broccoli or cauliflower	1
1 tablespoon peanut butter	4.5
1 large egg (scrambled)	6

* All values refer to a cooked 1-ounce portion of meat. A 3-ounce portion of meat, fish or chicken is often considered 1 serving. A 3-ounce portion is about the size of a deck of cards.