

# The Scoop on Protein Powder

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## **Protein shakes are great for breakfast:**

If you're eating an otherwise balanced diet, a protein shake can occasionally serve as a full meal replacement. This is especially convenient in the morning. If you don't have time for a healthy sit-down breakfast, a protein shake is a quick and easy way to start the day.

## **Protein shakes are surprisingly filling:**

Protein is filling and takes time to digest, so a protein shake can carry you for hours, with no need to eat anything else.



## **What to add to your protein shake:**

Boost the nutritional content of your shake by adding in berries, leafy green vegetables like kale or spinach, oats, peanut butter, or yogurt. This will also add to the flavour of your shake, if you're using an unflavoured powder.

## **Preventing age-related muscle loss:**

Protein is a primary component of muscle tissue, which is why bodybuilders have used protein powder for decades to help them build muscle.

A daily protein shake won't give you a bodybuilder's physique! But consuming an adequate amount of a protein on a regular basis will help keep your muscles strong and prevent age-related muscle loss.

### **After a workout:**

A protein shake can help your body recover after a tough workout session, while helping to promote muscle strength and gain. It might also be preferable to having a heavy meal right after you just worked out.

### **Typical protein content in most powders:**

Protein amounts vary across different protein powder brands, but 20 to 25 grams per serving is typical, so look for something in this range. This is roughly the same amount of protein you might get in a typical meal.

For comparison, here is the protein content of some common foods:

<b>Approximate Protein Content</b>	<b>Food</b>
34 grams	chicken breast, 4 oz
15 grams	chicken thigh or drumstick, 4 oz.
14 grams	2 large eggs
12 grams	chick peas, 1 cup
7 grams	1 large baked potato

### **Taste varies across powders:**

Protein powders don't all taste the same. You can enhance the flavour of your shake by adding fruit or other ingredients to it, like peanut butter. You can also get a flavoured protein powder, e.g.: chocolate or vanilla.



### **Texture varies across powders:**

Along with taste, texture also varies. Plant-based powders tend to have more of a "sandy" or "grainy" texture. This will be more noticeable if you're mixing your powder in water by hand, with no other ingredients to offset the texture with some creaminess.

For many people, this won't be a problem. But if you find that sandy/gritty texture off-putting, here are some solutions:

- use milk (regular, almond, cashew, etc.) instead of water to make things creamier
- use a blender to make sure the powder is thoroughly mixed in
- if mixing in a blender, add a banana to smooth things out

### **Plant-based powders:**

In the past, most protein powders were made from whey, a by-product from cheese production. But in recent years, plant-based protein powders have grown in popularity, and there are many options available.

These powders typically blend proteins from a variety of sources, such as: peas, hemp, brown rice, pumpkin seeds, and sunflower seeds. They might also throw in some "greens" such as spinach powder, broccoli powder, and/or kale powder

### **Whey-based powders and milk sensitivity:**

If you have any sensitivity to milk products, you might also have a reaction to whey. If so, select a powder that uses a different protein source (see plant-based protein powder options listed above.)



### **Check for unwanted ingredients:**

Protein powders are a processed food item, and may contain unhealthy ingredients like chemical preservatives, sugar, or artificial sweeteners. Some brands may also contain GMOs — genetically modified ingredients.

The vast majority of quality brands will keep things as pure as possible, and will leave out these unwanted ingredients. Read the ingredients label, and compare brands before making your purchase to ensure you're not getting those unwanted ingredients in the mix.

### **Expiry dates and storage:**

When buying your protein powder, check the expiry date on the canister. The expiry date should be at least one year out for whey-based powders, and closer to two years out for other types.

Store your powder in in a cool, dry place to maintain freshness. Avoid a storage location with a high temperature or lots of humidity, both of which will cause the product to deteriorate.

DON'T store your powder in the fridge! You want a cool location, not a cold one. Taking your powder in and out of the fridge may lead to condensation and moisture in the container, which isn't good.

*Did you know...*

You can use protein powder when baking!