

PATIENT: POLLY WANT-SOME-PROTEIN

# THE PROTEIN PRESCRIPTION

ADMINISTERED BY DR WLOSS

*By Selene Yeager / Meal plan by Kristen Beck*


TAKE AS DIRECTED

*Why this potent weight-loss weapon is your key  
to a slim body – and how to get your daily dose*



**Y**ou'd think if the low-carb craze taught us anything, it's the importance of protein. But even if you haven't eaten a burger bun since the late '90s, it doesn't mean you're getting enough of the big P. We're not suggesting you start chowing down on great hunks of bloody steak for breakfast, but getting the right amount of protein – from a variety of sources – can change the way you view weight loss (and your rear end) for the better.

So why aren't we eating enough protein? "Many women perceive foods that are rich in protein as being high in kilojoules or fattening," says Dr Laura Kruskall, director of nutrition sciences at the University of Nevada in the US. This isn't the case, although diehard counters will insist on pointing out that most proteins cost you more kJs than fruit and veg. (Well, duh.) Added to this, protein isn't as portable as other foods. The best sources – fish, meat, dairy and beans – aren't as quick or convenient as most carbs or the trusty old apple. "Traditional protein sources aren't usually grab and go. And if they are, they're often fried or unhealthy," says nutrition expert Angela Ginn. In light of the fact that a growing number of nutritionists believe the current dietary guidelines for this mighty macronutrient are too low, it seems we're really missing out. "So many women aren't eating enough protein in their diets and consequently become overweight as they fill up on carbs and fats instead," says WH nutrition expert Kristen Beck.

Consider this: a Johns Hopkins University, US, study found that a diet in which a quarter of the kJs came from lean protein sources reduced blood pressure, LDL ("bad") cholesterol and triglycerides (a type of fat found in your blood) better than a higher-carb diet. Other research finds that diets rich in protein can help prevent osteoporosis, diabetes and obesity. In fact, protein-packed snacks can play a big role in weight management, says nutritionist .



Lola Berry, author of *Inspiring Ingredients* (\$29.95, Berry Hill). "They keep you feeling full and satisfied," she says.

## THE POWER OF PROTEIN

The moment it leaves your fork, protein helps to taper your waistline. High-protein foods take more work to digest, metabolise and use, which means you burn more kJs processing them. They also take longer to leave your stomach, so you'll feel full sooner and for a longer amount of time. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out what that can do for your wobbly bits in the long term.

In a study published in *Nutrition Metabolism*, dieters who increased their protein intake to 30 per cent of their diet ate nearly 1800 fewer kJs a day and lost about 5kg over the 12-week study without using any other dietary measures. Feeling a bit more positive about the big P? There's more: when you factor in exercise, protein is doubly essential for making sure you lose fat, not muscle. Your body uses the amino acids in protein to build lean muscle, which not only makes you stronger and more toned, it also fries fat even when you're sitting on your (firm and shapely) bum. Ultimately, this keeps your metabolism humming along at high speed so you can burn off the occasional Anzac biscuit, no problem.

## PUMP IT UP

The current recommended daily protein intake for Aussie women is 46 grams per day (that's 0.75g per kilo of body weight for the average woman), according to the Australian National Health and Medical Research Council. But these guidelines haven't been updated for about five years and are lower than the guidelines for almost every other country. For example, in the US, experts advise between 0.8 grams and 1.1 grams of protein per 500g of your body weight. That's 104 to 143 grams a day for a 65kg woman, aiming for the

high end if you're very active, and on the low end if you're trying to lose weight. "In my opinion, 46g per day is too low to achieve real weight loss benefits," says Beck. "Around 80 grams per day is a better amount to aim for."

Even more important: aim to get at least 30 of your protein grams from your breakfast, says Dr Donald Layman, professor of nutrition at the University of Illinois in the US. (That's roughly the amount you'll get from two eggs and a yoghurt smoothie.) After fasting all night, your body is running on empty and may start drawing on muscle tissue for fuel if you don't replenish its protein stores first thing in the a.m. Plus, a study in the *International Journal of Obesity* found that protein-rich breakfasts can help regulate your appetite all day.

## BALANCE IT OUT

But not all proteins are created equal, advises Dr Kruskall. While nuts, wholegrains and vegies technically count, they don't contain all nine of the essential amino acids your body needs to build lean muscle. Those that do – known as complete proteins – are typically found in animal products. Your best flat-stomach bets are skinless white chicken or turkey breast, pork tenderloin and lean beef. All of these foods have less than 5g of fat and at least 25g of protein per 100g. Other good low-fat complete proteins include seafood and low-fat dairy.

And vegetarians, you need to get a little more creative. Try pairing incomplete proteins – peanut butter on wholemeal bread, or brown rice and beans, for example. This can substitute for complete ones.

Check out our 7-day meal plan (right) for great ideas on how to get more P-power into your daily diet. Vegos, swap the meaty bits with complete proteins like tofu, buckwheat and quinoa. The beauty of protein is that with the tasty options available, getting your daily dose can be a simple, satisfying and – ultimately – slimming pleasure. **wh**

COOKING TONIGHT? FOR 40 PROTEIN-RICH RECIPES, HEAD TO [womenshealthmag.com.au](http://womenshealthmag.com.au)

### TAKE AWAY OPTIONS

## PROTEIN TO GO

You can't carry around a grilled chicken breast in your handbag, but you can try these more portable options

### 1 HARD-BOILED EGGS (1 egg = 6 grams)

Hard-boil some eggs, stick them in the fridge for when you need a high-protein snack or to add protein to a meal. Safety note: it's important to eat them within four days; keep them in their shells until then.



### 2 PROTEIN DRINK (500ml = 30 grams)

Musashi's water-based P30 Protein Drink contains amino acids that are beneficial pre- and post-training. Contains 65 per cent of your protein RDI, and it's not loaded with sugar. Yay!



### 3 PROTEIN POWDER (1 sachet = 18.1 grams)

Keep these Body Science Shaping Protein for Women sachets at your desk for a quick post-lunchtime workout protein fix. They're also high in fibre and they contain omegas 3, 6 and 9.



### 4 PROTEIN BAR (1 bar = 8.8 – 8.9 grams)

A 30g Aussie Bodies Protein FX Lo Carb Mini Protein Bars gives 20 per cent of your RDI in a low-kJ treat. The Choc Raspberry and Choc Orange flavours are the best.





DOSAGE

## 7-DAY MEAL PLAN

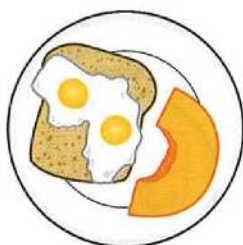
Cut out and keep this menu planner  
for your ultimate protein-filled week

This tasty plan devised by *WH* nutrition expert Kristen Beck\* isn't about getting you ready to enter Miss Muscle Builder 2011. Instead, you'll hit protein targets of around 80g per day while enjoying a leaner, slimmer body (and smashing your gym goals). This plan is for a 60-70kg woman wanting to lose weight, who works out three times a week. "If you work out more than this, or don't want to lose weight, either increase portion sizes or add a snack to keep you going," says Beck.

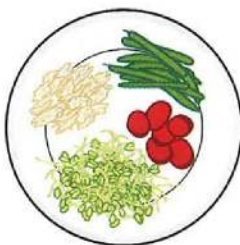
## Monday

## BREAKFAST

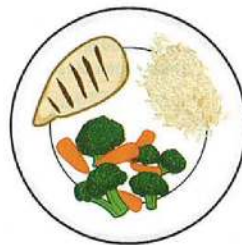
2 x eggs (12g protein) on wholemeal toast (5g protein) and a piece of fruit



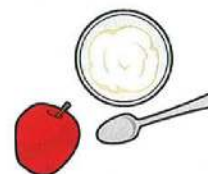
**LUNCH** Tuna salad: 100g tin water packed tuna (23g protein), green beans, cherry tomatoes, soy sprouts (2g protein)



**DINNER** Medium skinless chicken breast. (26g protein), 1 cup cooked brown rice (5g protein), 1 cup broccoli and carrot (2g protein)



**SNACK** 100g low fat plain yoghurt (6g protein) and a piece of fruit



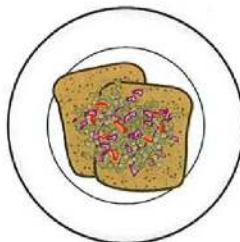
TOTAL PROTEIN Approx. 81 grams

## Tuesday

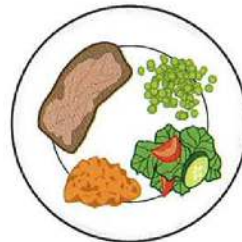
**BREAKFAST** Fruit smoothie: 300ml low fat milk (10g protein), ½ cup of favourite fruit, ¼ cup linseed meal (7.5g protein), 2 tbs skim milk powder (4.5g protein), honey or yoghurt to taste



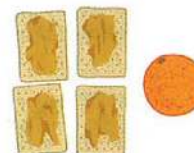
**LUNCH** Lentil salad: ½ tin lentils (8g protein) mixed with a little olive oil, Spanish onion and tomato on 2 slices of wholemeal toast or roll (5g protein)



**DINNER** 150g lean fillet steak (40g protein) with ½ cup mung beans (7g protein) and ½ cup salad vegies + ½ cup baked sweet potato (1g protein)



**SNACK** ½ tbs peanut butter (2.5g protein) on 4 small Vita-Weats (2.5g protein) and a piece of fruit



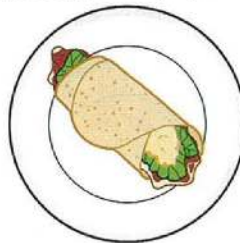
TOTAL PROTEIN Approx. 88 grams

## Wednesday

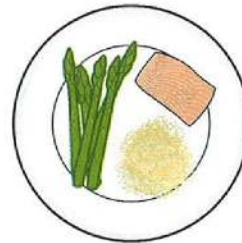
**BREAKFAST** Protein-rich breakfast cereal (eg, Special K Advantage/Goodness Superfoods Protein 1st) and ½ cup low fat milk (approx. 10g protein)



**LUNCH** Rare roast beef wrap: 80g rare roast beef (23g protein), with ½ cup hummus (4g protein) and 1 cup green leafy vegetables



**DINNER** 100g salmon steak (27g protein) with 1 cup cooked couscous (6g protein) and vegetables



**SNACK** Boiled egg (6g protein) with a piece of fruit

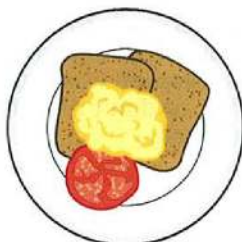


TOTAL PROTEIN Approx. 76 grams

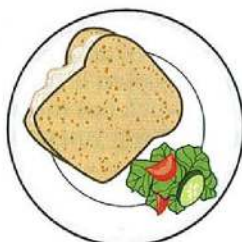


## Thursday

**BREAKFAST** 2 scrambled eggs (12g protein) on wholemeal toast (5g protein) with grilled tomato



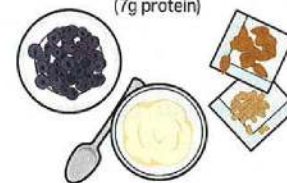
**LUNCH** 100g lean shaved turkey (28g protein) on 2 slices rye bread (5g protein) and salad (1g protein)



**DINNER** 1 cup cooked kidney beans (13g protein), 1 cup cooked brown rice (5g protein), 1 cup salad leaves, fresh ginger and green chilli



**DESSERT** ½ cup custard made with reduced-fat milk (4g protein) and fruit  
**SNACK** ¼ cup roasted soybeans (7g protein) and ¼ cup almonds (7g protein)



**TOTAL PROTEIN** Approx. 87 grams

## Friday

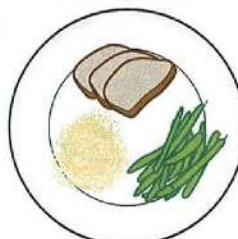
**BREAKFAST** ½ cup natural muesli (4g protein) with 100g low-fat plain yoghurt (6g protein), ¼ cup wheatgerm (8g protein) and a piece of fruit



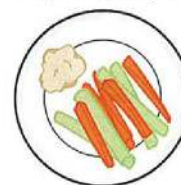
**LUNCH** 100g tuna sashimi (23g protein), 1 cup cooked brown rice (5g protein) and 1 cup salad vegetables



**DINNER** 100g pork tenderloin (30g protein), 1 cup cooked couscous (6g protein) and 1 cup vegetables



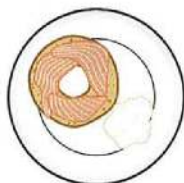
**SNACK** ½ cup reduced fat hummus (6g protein) and 1 cup carrot/celery sticks



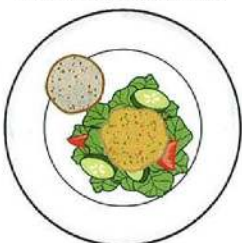
**TOTAL PROTEIN** Approx. 88 grams

## Saturday

**BREAKFAST** Smoked salmon bagel: 60g smoked salmon (14g protein), 40g (2 large tsp) ricotta or low-fat cream cheese (4g protein) on a wholemeal bagel (7g protein)



**LUNCH** Vegetarian burger (lentil, tofu or chickpea patty – approx 4-8g of protein) with salad on a wholegrain roll (4g protein)



**DINNER** Chilli con carne with 80g lean mince (21g protein) and ½ cup cooked kidney beans (7g protein) plus 1 cup baked pumpkin and green salad



**DESSERT** Fruit and ½ cup frozen yoghurt (9g protein).  
**SNACK** ½ cup trail mix (6g protein)



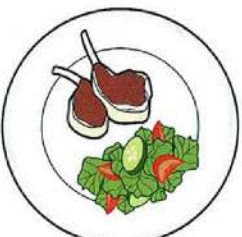
**TOTAL PROTEIN** Approx. 80 grams

## Sunday

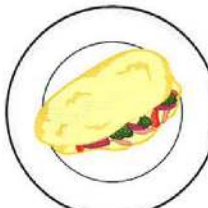
**BREAKFAST** Bacon and mushrooms: 2 rashers lean/short-cut bacon (8g protein), wholemeal toast (5g protein), ½ cup mushrooms (1.5g protein) and tomato



**LUNCH** 2-3 small, lean BBQ or grilled lamb cutlets, approx. 80g (21g protein) and salad



**DINNER** Omelette: 2 eggs (12g protein), 50g smoked salmon (12g protein), ½ cup parmesan cheese (10g protein) all the vegies you can fit into the pan



**SNACK** ½ cup frozen yoghurt (9g protein) and fruit or skim milk smoothie with fruit (10g protein)



**TOTAL PROTEIN** Approx. 88.5 grams