

## Eating less protein could help you live longer

6th August 2026



There are many things that can shorten our lives. In particular, many kinds of food are bad for us. A new study suggests eating protein could make us age faster. This is the opposite to what we have been told for decades. Scientists

usually tell us that eating meat and dairy products helps us to live longer. The new study is from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the USA. Researchers found that a high-protein diet without exercise leads to an increase in body fat in only four months. Professor Dudley Lamming said: "People who are eating more protein tend to have higher rates of developing cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and even potentially a shorter lifespan."

Protein is an essential part of our diet. It is made up of amino acids. These help us build muscle and keep our bodies strong. We can find protein in many foods, including in meat, fish, dairy products, and eggs. If people eat a vegetarian diet, they can find protein in beans, lentils, nuts, and tofu. In many parts of the world, people are eating too much protein. Supermarkets are full of protein-packed food, protein powder, and energy bars. Consuming these could be reducing our longevity. Professor Lamming said: "Because most people are relatively sedentary, they are likely consuming more protein than they actually need, which probably has negative health consequences."

**Sources:** yahoo / huffingtonpost / telegraph.co.uk

## Writing

A vegetarian diet is best. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

food that is bad / age / meat / dairy products / protein / diet / exercise / fat / cancer / amino acids / muscle / fish / beans / nuts / tofu / supermarkets / energy bars / health

## True / False

- 1) The article says all food can shorten our lives. T / F
- 2) The article says eating protein could make us get old more quickly. T / F
- 3) A new study suggests the opposite to what scientists once believed. T / F
- 4) Eating protein could mean a higher change of getting heart disease. T / F
- 5) Protein is made up of citric and acetic acid. T / F
- 6) The article says protein is in lentils and tofu. T / F
- 7) The article says supermarkets are full of food packed with protein. T / F
- 8) A professor said most people get a lot of exercise. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                         |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. <b>in particular</b> | a. eating       |
| 2. <b>age</b>           | b. getting      |
| 3. <b>opposite</b>      | c. important    |
| 4. <b>developing</b>    | d. sitting      |
| 5. <b>even</b>          | e. especially   |
| 6. <b>essential</b>     | f. results      |
| 7. <b>reducing</b>      | g. surprisingly |
| 8. <b>sedentary</b>     | h. grow old     |
| 9. <b>consuming</b>     | i. cutting      |
| 10. <b>consequences</b> | j. reverse      |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What do you do for your muscles?
- c) Which is better, fish or meat?
- d) What do you think of beans, lentils, nuts, and tofu?
- e) What are the bad things about a sedentary lifestyle?
- f) Why is it important to exercise?
- g) What do you need to change about your lifestyle?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

## Phrase Match

1. There are many things that can
  2. eating protein could make
  3. the opposite to what we have been
  4. meat and dairy
  5. cardiovascular
  6. Protein is an essential
  7. eat a vegetarian
  8. supermarkets are full of protein-
  9. most people are relatively
  10. consuming more protein than they
- a. disease
  - b. told for decades
  - c. diet
  - d. sedentary
  - e. shorten our lives
  - f. products
  - g. part of our diet
  - h. us age faster
  - i. actually need
  - j. packed food

## Discussion – Student B

- a) What do you know about protein?
- b) How much protein do you eat?
- c) What food do you eat that is bad for you?
- d) What dairy products do you like and dislike?
- e) What problems does too much body fat cause?
- f) Do you worry about diseases?
- g) What do you do to live a long and healthy life?
- h) How old do you want to live to be?

## Spelling

1. in rlaurcipat
2. this is the potipseo
3. what we have been told for sceddea
4. higher rates of developing crcean
5. cardiovascular eieassd
6. a shorter lnaipfes
7. an lnsseieat part of our diet
8. these help us build lmscue
9. meat, fish, raiyd products, and eggs
10. eat a reeatvgain diet
11. reducing our einoltgvy
12. eiegtanv health consequences

### Answers – Synonym Match

|      |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. g | 2. h | 3. j | 4. b | 5. g  |
| 6. c | 7. i | 8. d | 9. a | 10. f |

## Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions.  
(Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

|     |                                                                          |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | What in particular does the article say is bad for us?                   |
| 2.  | What does a new study say could make us age faster?                      |
| 3.  | Who has told us that that eating meat and dairy helps us to live longer? |
| 4.  | What does a high-protein diet and no exercise lead to?                   |
| 5.  | What problems could eating protein create besides cancer and diabetes?   |
| 6.  | What is protein made up of?                                              |
| 7.  | Who can find protein in tofu, nuts, and beans?                           |
| 8.  | What does the article say is full of protein-packed food?                |
| 9.  | What did a professor say most people were?                               |
| 10. | What health consequences does eating too much protein have?              |

## Speaking – Protein

Rank these with your partner. Put the best food at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Beef
- Chicken
- Beans
- Cheese
- Nuts
- Salmon
- Tofu
- Eggs

### Answers – True False

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | F | 2 | T | 3 | T | 4 | T | 5 | F | 6 | T | 7 | T | 8 | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.