

High-quality protein essential for optimal growth, development and health in humans

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Contrary to recent reports that certain meat protein is bad for you, a Texas A&M AgriLife Research Faculty Fellow scientist has found adequate consumption of high-quality protein is essential for optimal growth, development and health in humans.

Dr. Guoyao Wu's research appears in the journal *Food & Function*. In his journal article, Dietary Protein Intake and Human Health, Wu says an appropriate mixture of animal and plant-based foods is a practical way to ensure balanced provision of dietary amino acids for the young and adults.

"There is not a fixed amount of [protein](#) intake that suits all people in all age groups," said Wu, also a distinguished professor in the department of animal science at Texas A&M University. "Individuals should adjust their intake of protein and other nutrients according to metabolic rates, physiological needs and health status."

In the paper, Wu said a sufficient supply of essential amino acids and synthesizable amino acids plays a key role in sustaining skeletal-muscle protein synthesis and mass and function, which includes physical strength.

In practice, Wu said adequate consumption of lean meat, which is a source of high-quality dietary protein and vitamins and minerals, can help individuals realize the health benefits of moderate or intense exercise.

"To date, there are myths about [amino acids](#) and protein nutrition in humans due to inadequate understanding of the science," Wu said. "Sufficient intake of high-quality protein from animal products such as lean meat and milk, is essential for optimal growth, development and health of children, as well as for optimal maintenance, function and health of tissues including skeletal muscle, brain, heart, kidneys, liver and gut in adults."

Wu notes that consumption of protein above safe upper limits should be avoided to prevent any adverse [health](#) problems.

More information: Guoyao Wu. Dietary protein intake and human health, *Food Funct.* (2016). [DOI: 10.1039/C5FO01530H](https://doi.org/10.1039/C5FO01530H)

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