

Protein Packs a Powerful Punch

Protein is an essential part of a healthy diet. Lean protein helps lower cholesterol in the body. It also promotes weight loss because people who consume a higher protein diet (about 30% of daily calories from protein) feel more satisfied and full, which helps prevent overeating.

A 3-ounce serving of lean beef provides 25 grams of protein and 10 essential nutrients, which is 50% of your recommended Daily Value of protein. Those nutrients are iron which helps your body use oxygen, choline that supports nervous system development, protein that helps preserve and build muscle, selenium that helps protect cells from damage, vitamins B6 and B12 which help maintain brain function, zinc which helps maintain a healthy immune system, phosphorus that helps build bones and teeth, niacin that supports energy production and metabolism, and riboflavin that helps convert food into fuel.

The daily recommendations of protein are 56 grams per day for a sedentary man and 46 grams for a sedentary woman. Visit the Texas Beef Council website at www.txbeef.org for a complete list of tasty recipes to help you consume these recommendations into your daily diet. Here are two from that website that are not only delicious, but low in calories.

Mediterranean Beef Salad

Ingredients

1. 1 beef Top Sirloin Steak Boneless, cut 1 inch thick
2. 3 medium oranges
3. 2 tablespoons olive oil
4. 1 teaspoon garlic-pepper seasoning
5. 12 fresh figs, stems removed, cut into quarters
6. 6 cups fresh baby spinach
7. 1/2 cup drained canned chickpeas
8. 1/2 cup thinly sliced red onion
9. 1/2 cup coarsely chopped pistachio nuts (optional)
10. 1/2 cup crumbled Gorgonzola or other blue cheese (optional)

Preparation

1. Grate peel and squeeze juice from 1 orange. Whisk 1/4 cup of orange juice, 1 tablespoon orange peel and oil in small bowl. Set aside. Peel and cut segments from remaining 2 oranges. Set aside. Press garlic-pepper seasoning evenly onto beef steaks.

2. Place steaks on grid over medium, ash-covered coals. Grill, covered, 11 to 15 minutes (over medium heat on preheated gas grill, 13 to 16 minutes) for medium rare (145°F) to medium (160°F) doneness, turning occasionally.
3. Carve steak into slices. Assemble salad by layering spinach, beans, onion, figs, orange segments and steak slices. Top with nuts and cheese, if desired. Drizzle with orange dressing.

Nutrition Information

Per serving: 411 calories; 13 g fat (3 g saturated fat; 7 g monounsaturated fat); 70 mg cholesterol; 255 mg sodium; 48 g carbohydrate; 9.0 g fiber; 30 g protein; 11.5 mg niacin; 1.0 mg vitamin B₆; 11.5 mcg vitamin B₁₂; 3.8 mg iron; 31.2 mcg selenium; 5.2 mg zinc; 113.23 mg choline.

Lemon-Peppered Beef Steak Salad

Ingredients

1. 1 beef Top Sirloin Steak Boneless, cut 1 inch thick (about 1-1/4 pounds)
2. 1 package (10 ounces) torn mixed salad greens
3. 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
4. 1/4 cup olive oil
5. 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
6. 2 teaspoons lemon pepper
7. 2 teaspoons Dijon-style mustard
8. 2 cloves garlic, crushed

Preparation

1. In medium bowl, whisk together dressing ingredients. Remove and reserve 1/4 cup for salad greens.
2. Trim fat from beef steak. Cut steak lengthwise in half and then crosswise into 1/2-inch thick strips. Add beef to remaining dressing; toss to coat. Heat large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until hot. Add beef (1/2 at a time) and stir-fry 2 to 3 minutes or until outside surface is no longer pink. (Do not overcook.) Remove from skillet with slotted spoon.
3. In large bowl, combine salad greens and reserved dressing; toss to coat. Add cheese; toss lightly. Arrange beef over greens; garnish as desired. Serve immediately.

Nutrition Information

Per serving: 350 calories; 21 g fat (5 g saturated fat; 13 g monounsaturated fat); 66 mg cholesterol; 256 mg sodium; 3 g carbohydrate; 1.6 g fiber; 36 g protein; 9.6 mg niacin; 0.8 mg vitamin B6; 1.9 mcg vitamin B12; 3.2 mg iron; 39.2 mcg selenium; 6.6 mg zinc.

Sources: Texas Beef Council

For more information on this topic, you may contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office at 903-473-4580 or visit us at rains.agrilife.org. We are also on Facebook at [Facebook.com/pages/Rains-County-Family-Consumer-Sciences](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Rains-County-Family-Consumer-Sciences).