

The Plant Protein Plan

For anyone eating dairy-free who wants a protein that is not quietly missing an amino acid. Every line below restates a claim verified against Tier-1 medical sources. Nothing here is invented, and nothing is for sale.

✓ CHECKED AGAINST CLEVELAND CLINIC · HARVARD HEALTH PUBLISHING

1

Complete means all nine

A complete protein carries adequate amounts of all nine essential amino acids. Incomplete ones may contain them in amounts too small to count on. (Cleveland Clinic)

2

Pea and rice differ

Pea protein contains all nine essential amino acids; brown rice protein does not on its own. Each covers the other's shortfall. (Cleveland Clinic)

3

The honest limit

Plant powders generally have a lower amino acid profile and reduced bioavailability than animal proteins. (Harvard Health)

1. Read the source line, not the front of the tub

This one line tells you whether anything is missing.

WHY THIS WORKS

Cleveland Clinic notes pea protein contains all nine essential amino acids while brown rice protein does not on its own. Pea typically runs low in methionine and cysteine; rice typically runs low in lysine. A blend covers both gaps.

SOURCE: CLEVELAND CLINIC

DO THIS WEEK

- ☐ Find the protein source line on the back panel
- ☐ Prefer a pea and rice blend, or soy, over a single plant source
- ☐ Treat a vague 'plant protein blend' with no named sources as a no

2. Insist on independent certification

The category is loosely regulated, so this is the shortcut.

WHY THIS WORKS

Protein powders are dietary supplements and are not held to the same standards as food or medicine, and added sugar varies widely by brand. Independent certification is the practical way to know the tub contains what the panel claims.

SOURCE: HARVARD HEALTH PUBLISHING

DO THIS WEEK

- ☐ Look for NSF Certified for Sport or equivalent batch testing
- ☐ Check the added sugar line before the claims on the front
- ☐ No certification means no purchase, regardless of price

3. Know the honest trade you are making

Worth stating plainly, because nobody selling it will.

WHY THIS WORKS

Harvard Health reports whey appears particularly effective for building muscle in older adults, more so than plant protein or casein, and that plant powders have a lower amino acid profile and reduced bioavailability. A good blend closes the amino acid gap. It does not erase the absorption difference.

SOURCE: HARVARD HEALTH PUBLISHING

DO THIS WEEK

- ☐ If you eat dairy and your only goal is muscle, consider whey isolate instead
- ☐ If you are dairy-free, a certified pea and rice blend is the sound choice
- ☐ Keep total daily protein and training steady so the source matters less

4. Get most of your protein from food

The scoop is for the gap, not for the meal.

WHY THIS WORKS

Cleveland Clinic notes shakes generally contain fewer nutrients than the whole foods they replace, and that a wide variety of legumes, lentils, nuts, seeds and whole grains supplies the complete protein you need across a day.

SOURCE: CLEVELAND CLINIC

DO THIS WEEK

- ☐ Cooked lentils bring 17 g per cup, chickpeas 16 g, edamame 17 g
- ☐ Build two plant-protein meals a week you would actually repeat
- ☐ Use the powder only on the days food does not reach your target

5. Spread it across the day

One large dose does less than three sensible ones.

WHY THIS WORKS

Cleveland Clinic notes the body uses roughly 25 to 40 grams of protein per sitting, so spacing protein across meals does more than loading it into one. A 20 gram scoop sits comfortably inside that window.

SOURCE: CLEVELAND CLINIC

DO THIS WEEK

- ☐ Aim for a protein source at each meal
- ☐ Keep any single meal under about 40 g of protein
- ☐ Place the scoop where the gap actually is, usually breakfast or after training

EVERY CLAIM ABOVE, TRACED TO ITS SOURCE

Cleveland Clinic, What Are Complete Proteins? · <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/do-i-need-to-worry-about-eating-complete-proteins>

Cleveland Clinic, How to Choose the Best Protein Powder for You · <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/7-tips-choosing-best-protein-powder>

Harvard Health Publishing, Muscle loss and protein needs in older adults · <https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthy-aging-and-longevity/muscle-loss-and-protein-needs-in-older-adults>

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