**Protein Supplements 2019**

I’ve had a request to share my thoughts on dietary protein. One of the most recent themes in weight loss and one that I think is truthful and important to understand is that all calories are not the same. It’s important that you understand what kind of calories you are eating, especially if you are interested in weight loss and long-term weight management.

One of those important nutrients, whose calories are solid and important for many aspects of our bodies, young and old, and even more important for the journey of weight loss, is protein.

“Protein is the single most important nutrient for weight loss and a better-looking body,” says Kris Gunners, BSc (Healthline Newsletter, 5/29/17). “A high protein intake boosts metabolism, reduces appetite and changes several weight-regulating hormones. It also helps you lose weight and belly fat by working via several different mechanisms.”

Increasing protein in your diet will give your hypothalamus a more ‘full-feeling’ causing the appetite reducing hormones to kick in and the hunger hormones to reduce. With these two hormones working together you will be less hungry and therefore naturally eat less, reducing your overall caloric intake resulting in weight loss.

During digestion, all foods (calories) digest and metabolize differently. Gunners explains the thermic effect of food (TEF) during digestion as the calories burned while the body is digesting and metabolizing the food in its stomach.

“Although not all sources agree on the exact figures, it is clear that protein has a much higher thermic effect (20-30%) compared to carbs (5-10%) and fat (0-3%),” says Gunner. It takes a lot more energy to digest protein.

Protein also increases metabolism around the clock, even while sleeping. So, all day long if you are burning more calories, maintaining and losing weight becomes easier.

Research supports that individuals who eat more protein in their diets, tend to eat fewer calories overall. High-protein diets are highly satiating, so they simply lead to reduced hunger and appetite, which ends in making it much easier to eat less.

“In one study, protein at 30% of calories caused people to automatically drop their caloric intake by 441 calories per day,” says Gunner. That was without changing anything else in their diet; no purposeful caloric restriction, no carb reduction, no fat restrictions. Even snacking and cravings have been shown to be reduced by 50% when more protein is in our meals.

The most important part of this equation is the long-term, keeping off the weight side. Studies have shown that individuals with a modest increase in protein (15-18% of calories) were able to keep their weight loss off by 50% when compared to those who ended up regaining their weight.

As I mentioned in last weeks article, weight loss usually equals muscle loss. Unless you strength train regularly. Loosing muscle equals reducing metabolism which equals burning less calories and less overall success and satisfaction with your body.

“For this reason, a high protein intake and heavy strength training are two incredibly important components of an effective fat loss plan,” says Gunner. “Not only do they help keep your metabolism high, they also make sure that what is underneath the fat actually looks good. Without protein and strength training you may end up looking “skinny-fat” instead of fit and lean.”

According to studies, a high protein diet is considered 30% of your daily caloric intake and it is best to spread your protein intake throughout the day by eating some protein with every meal/snack.

How’s the best way to get protein into your diet? The best way is through protein-rich foods; meats, fish, eggs, dairy legumes, nuts, etc. If you are having trouble getting enough protein into your diet, there are supplements available. Research supports that “Whey Protein” which comes from milk is the best for digestion and rapid rise in amino acids. Second, would be “Casein Protein” also milk based and third would be egg proteins. Followed by pea proteins, hemp proteins, brown rice proteins and then mixed plant proteins.