

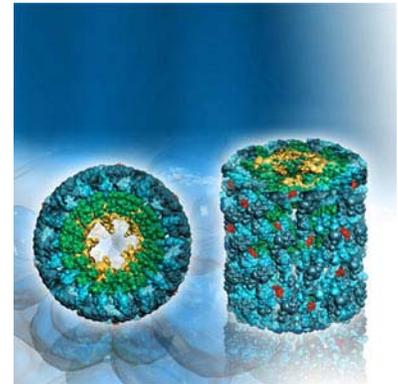


March 29, 2016 – Grand Rapids, MI

## Research Update: Protein

Two recent studies on protein mean it's time for a research update. Let's begin by covering a couple of basics about protein.

By definition, a protein contains all nine essential amino acids. That includes all animal sources of protein. It also includes most beans and nuts; that's how vegetarians get enough protein. When you have the nine essential amino acids, your body can make the other 11 amino acids you need to make everything from hormones to muscle. The benefit of getting protein from plant sources is that you also take in the phytonutrients you can't get from animal sources.



Proteins are packed into tight little packages. When they're heated, as in pasteurizing milk, the proteins unravel, and that's called denaturing. Denatured protein is considered by some to be a bad thing that negatively affects the body's ability to use that protein, but that's not how the body works. It digests proteins and absorbs them as individual amino acids; denatured or not, if the amino acids are there, the body will absorb and use them. This also applies to protein powders from milk or vegetables sources. If we take the denatured argument to its logical extension, then we would have to eat all protein from animal sources raw. Rare? Yes, I like my steak rare, but you can have my chicken tartare.

We'll talk about protein intake and sleep in Thursday's message.

What are you prepared to do today?

**Dr. Chet**

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