

Keys to choosing Protein Powder

Protein powders can be as confusing as vitamins to choose when you're standing in the grocery, health food or drug store. Here are a few key things to note on the nutrient breakdown:

Protein source:

Be aware if you have any sensitivities and/or preferences. There are lots of options out there now including:

- whey – derived from dairy
- casein – derived from dairy
- soy – made from defatted soy flour
- plant based options – be aware if they are free of gluten, lactose, soy
 - o brown rice and yellow pea – gluten and lactose free, not a complete protein
 - o hemp and chia – easily digested, gluten and lactose free, complete

Breakdown:

Remember, you're primarily using protein powder as a convenient option as part of the "Nutritional Timing" strategy. When using for recovery, you're shooting for around that 2:1 ratio (carbs to protein) or 1:1 and you only need about 100-150 calories, so you don't always have to choose the powder that has THE MOST grams per serving.

For example: if a recovery drink is 120 calories:

- ✓ at 2:1 = 80 cal from carb + 40 cal from protein = 10 g of protein
- ✓ at 1:1 = 60 cal from carb + 60 cal from protein = 15 g of protein

Serving size:

Like many supplements, bars and snacks, you have to pay close attention to serving sizes as a quick glance can be deceiving!

Container size:

This is my dig against both a bad marketing and environmental choice. I HATE when you buy what seems to be the jumbo option of great value only to find less than HALF of the container full. I can't help but feel I've been fooled but worse, that the company has done so at the cost of unnecessary bulk to our landfills!

Buy Smart

Before you buy a container of protein powder you're hard-pressed to fit in your car, use these smart buy tips

- **short list your options** to 1-3 based on nutrient breakdown – based on protein source, size and other essentials (carbs, sugars, etc.)
- **buy a smaller container** to make sure you like the taste and texture
- **opt for original or vanilla first** so you can vary the taste with other ingredients
- **buy online if you can** – once you find one that fits for you as it can be a lot less expensive (but always make sure you factor in shipping costs!)
- **avoid monster containers** – if you can...definitely for the environment but it's also annoying when you can't fit it conveniently in a cupboard in your kitchen. You don't want to have to store it in a special storage unit in the garage!