

Protein helps us retain muscle mass as we age

My girlfriends are 60-67 years old, in pretty good health and exercise regularly and tend toward eating a plant-based diet. None of us are obese. We have gotten mixed messages about how much protein we need. What does the evidence tell you? — RR, Greenville.

Dr. Jacek Bednarz, Jr in completing a Family Medicine Residency at ECU Health and has this information to share with you.

When I moved to North Carolina from Canada, I was eager to experience its renowned barbecue culture with my top choice when craving a satisfying meal being pulled pork sandwiches.

It is not a dinner option I would suggest daily, but it hits the spot when I'm hungry. The sandwiches are so satiating in part because the protein content signals the brain to feel full and satisfied.

Protein plays a crucial role in many bodily functions from birth to our golden years. Protein is needed for growth early in development, but it is vital in our later years of life, too. After reaching our mid-thirties we slowly, naturally lose muscle mass and strength, which is called



KATHY KOLASA

sarcopenia. Sarcopenia typically accelerates in our sixties and can lead to noticeable hinderance in daily life.

Early signs of muscle loss are feeling tired throughout the day, loss of

coordination, and having increased difficulty manipulating everyday objects. Losing lean muscle mass is a predictor of disability and death.

Staying physically active while fueling our body with the right nutrition can prevent and even reverse the effects of sarcopenia.

The recommended daily intake of protein for an average adult is 0.8 grams per kilogram (kg) of body weight per day. That means an individual weighing 150 pounds or 68 kg would need about 54 grams of protein daily.

However, this amount was not based on the needs of older healthy adults — or those without significant kidney disease. In the last 10 years, numerous individual studies advocate for higher protein intakes in healthy older adults. Authors of a 2021 review article on protein source and muscle health in older healthy adults concluded that the recommendation to prevent sarcopenia should be 1.2 grams



OLEKSANDRA NAUMENKO/SHUTTERSTOCK

One important way to help support muscle health is to intake an adequate amount of protein.

per kg body weight per day. The individual mentioned above would need 82 grams rather than 54 grams of protein per day.

To give perspective, a pulled pork sandwich from a local Barbecue restaurant has about 30 grams of protein. It is also worth discussing protein quality. The term high-quality protein describes food sources that are easily digestible, satiating, contain additional nutrients (such as vitamins and minerals) and contain all the amino acids — the body's building blocks of protein — needed for repair and maintenance. Animal products are usually sources of high-quality protein.

There are a variety of foods that offer a good source of protein. Chicken breast is a healthy and

affordable source of protein. A tray of chicken breasts from Walmart runs about \$14. A 6 oz breast provides an amazing 52 grams of protein. Eggs are a good and affordable source. For about \$10 at Walmart, you can get a box of 60 eggs, with each yielding 6 grams of protein.

Legumes such as soybeans, chickpeas, kidney beans, lentils are quality sources of protein. A cup of tofu has about 10 grams of protein. Supplements such as protein shakes and powders are also an option. However, always check the nutrition label as these supplements sometimes have added sugars that make them a less healthy option. Most ready-to-make protein shakes

range from 9 to 20 grams protein per serving.

Here is an example of a 1,500-calorie day that includes 82 grams of protein. Breakfast: 2 large eggs, scrambled with spinach, a medium-sized apple, a slice of whole-grain toast with 1 tablespoon almond butter. Snack: Greek yogurt (6 oz) and a Handful of mixed berries. Lunch: Grilled chicken breast (4 ounces), Quinoa

(1/2 cup), mixed vegetables (broccoli, bell peppers, carrots — 1 cup, steamed), side salad of mixed greens with 1 Tablespoon olive oil for dressing. Snack: cottage cheese (1/2 cup) and pineapple chunks (1/2 cup). Dinner: Baked salmon fillet (4 oz), Quinoa (1/2 cup, cooked), Steamed asparagus (1 cup). Snack: Air-popped popcorn (3 cups).

A registered dietitian nutritionist can help tailor this recommendation to your preferences, budget and health needs. Older adults without moderate to severe kidney disease should talk with their doctor to decide if ingesting 1.2 grams of protein per kg of body weight daily, instead of the 0.8 g that has been universally recommended for adults to prevent decline of muscle mass and strength is right for them.

Professor emerita Kathy Kolasa, a registered dietitian nutritionist and Ph.D., is an affiliate professor in the Brody School of Medicine at ECU. Contact her at kolasaka@ecu.edu.

OBITUARIES

Walter Samuel "Sammy" Pollard

GREENVILLE - Mr. Walter Samuel "Sammy" Pollard, Jr., 83, passed away on Thursday, January 25, 2024 at ECU Health Center.

A graveside service was conducted on Monday, January 29th at 2 PM in the Mausoleum at Pinewood Memorial Park with Pastor Clark Stallings officiating. Sammy will be fondly remembered for his love of family. He adored his grandchildren and great-grandchildren and was looking forward to the birth of his 3rd great-grandchild which he learned was going to be a little girl.

A native of Pitt County, Sammy was born to the late Sam and Marjorie Jenkins Pollard. He was a graduate of J.H. Rose High School. Sammy went to work for the family business for a number of years before deciding to venture out of his own into the residential construction field where he had his own business called Pollard Construction. He remained in that business for approximately 10 years. He then decided to return to the family business, Sam Pollard and Son Heating, Air Conditioning and Plumbing, to innovate the company into a residential service business that continues to this day. Sammy continued his input into the business even after his retirement in 2005 as a consulting partner. The continuation of the family business was always his greatest achievement and passion. The business, Sam Pollard and Son, Inc., has served the local community for over 75 years.

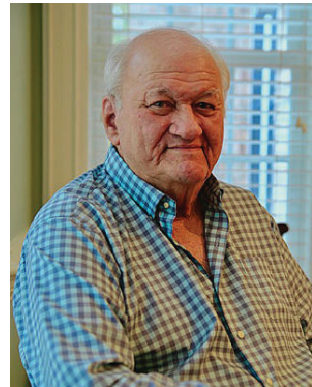
His leisure time was spent at his summer home in Bath, NC where he loved his summers on Back Creek with friends and family. He also loved his Purple Martins birds that he provided hundreds of migratory homes for.

Wife of 59 years, Betty Lou Pollard; Son, Walter Samuel "Walt" Pollard, III and wife, Kathy, of Greenville; Son, Todd Pollard and wife, Melissa, of Aliso Viejo, California.

Grandchildren, Whitley Pollard Stallings and husband, Tucker, and Canon Pollard, all of Greenville; Great-grandchildren, Worth and Vander Stallings.

The family received friends on Monday following the service at the mausoleum. Memorial donations may be made to: Hope of Glory Ministries, P.O. Box 2038, Greenville, NC 27836.

Online condolences at www.wilkersonfuneralhome.com



Gospel group The Martins to perform Friday

THE DAILY REFLECTOR

The Dove Award-winning gospel group The Martins will perform on Friday along with comedian Mickey Bell at the Farm on I-95 in Selma, about 60 minutes southwest of Greenville.

This Winter Break dinner concert, catered by the Farmhouse Cafe & Bakery, is presented by the North Carolina State Singing Convention at the farm venue, 215 Batten Road. The event starts at 6:30 p.m.

Siblings, Judy, Jonathan and Joyce Martin, from Arkansas, rose to international success in the 1990s and over the years garnered eight Dove Awards from the Gospel

Music Association, three Grammy nominations and multiple hit songs.

After nearly a decade of pursuing individual music careers, the trio reunited in 2010. Still Standing, released in July 2018, received the 2019 Grammy nomination for Best Roots Gospel Album.

Founded in 1921 in Benson, the State Annual Singing Convention is among the largest and longest running gatherings of gospel singers in the United States.

The 103rd Singing Convention is scheduled for June 2024. Visit www.martinonline.com or www.gospelmusicssingingconvention.org for more information.



Gospel performers The Martins will headline a Friday show in Selma.

Audit: Farmville's finances are solid

DONNA MARIE WILLIAMS Town of Farmville

FARMVILLE — The Town of Farmville received an unmodified opinion with zero findings on its 2022-23 fiscal year audit from independent auditor firm Barrow, Parris and Davenport. An unmodified opinion with no findings is the highest distinction given for a municipal audit.

Audit findings were presented by auditor Jay Parris during the Board of Commissioners meeting on Jan. 8.

"All your opinions are unmodified and clean. You have no findings for this year. That's tremendous for a town with a \$20 million plus budget and for a town the size of Farmville," Parris said.

The auditor did note two performance indicators that serve as warnings for future budgets and acknowledge weak points in the town's finances.

The first was the timeliness of the audit report. The audit report was due to the state by Dec. 1, 2023, however, Parris submitted

the audit in January. This was due to unforeseen circumstances including medical issues with a key finance staff person as well as the death of the mother of another key finance staff member during the audit process. Staff illness within the audit firm also contributed to delays in completing the audit.

The second finding was found in the town's electric fund reserves. The town's electric fund reserves are used to ensure the town can replace and maintain its electric system and assets should a sudden need — such as a hurricane taking down transformers and poles — arise.

The town is required by the state to set aside 16 percent of operating expenses as a reserve. The town currently has 12 percent. The town has had this performance indicator in the past, according to Parris, and has been successful in increasing the size of the reserve over the course of the last year. This was accomplished by eliminating debt from the electric fund as well as a modest

electric rate increase.

"You are addressing it and dealing with it," Parris said, adding the town will need to continue to monitor its fund reserve balance. "You are about to be out of that issue," Parris said.

The town has also improved the health of its water fund reserves by cutting expenses, retiring debt, and raising rates, he added.

Parris noted that the town's sewer fund is operating with a slight surplus. "Your sewer fund is holding its own. Any small town in eastern North Carolina is going to be happy to have it over the line a little bit," Parris said.

The town's unreserved fund balance is 35.62 percent and is in line with the Local Government Commission guidelines. The LGC suggests that about 36 percent be set aside in reserves.

The town's property tax rate of .49 per 100 also remains unchanged and has for many years, Parris said. The town's tax collection rate is 99.3 percent, he added.

Parris thanked town staff for all their efforts in producing the audit and commended the town on taking actions to improve the town's financial condition over the years.

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