



# Protein is important in your diet too

The incredible edible egg is an extremely popular protein that goes well with virtually any dish—stir fry, salad, casseroles, and toast (of course) to name a few. With 6 grams of protein and 13 essential vitamins and minerals—including brain-healthy choline and **vitamin D**—one large egg boasts a pretty impressive nutrient profile. Since the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans did away with cholesterol recommendations, there are zero reasons to avoid eggs. Eggs are a favorite protein option for **Cara Harbstreet, M.S., R.D., L.D.**, a registered dietitian and owner of **Street Smart Nutrition**. She says they're affordable, easy to find, and can easily bulk up any meal of the day. But research indicates eating a wide variety of proteins can actually do some good for your health.

Harbstreet says. But if you're finding yourself hungry or having difficulty recovering after workouts, illness, or injuries, you may need to increase your protein intake or change up the timing you're consuming protein-packed foods, she adds.

Balance out your carb-rich sushi rice with a side

of protein-packed edamame. This green soy bean has 9 g of protein and roughly 100 calories in a cup serving. What's more, you'll also get a dose of fiber, potassium, and **vitamin A**.

**Cottage Cheese** Cottage cheese doesn't get nearly enough love. At roughly 12 g of protein and

100 calories per—cup, it's a satisfying midday snack and a great source of **calcium**. Harbstreet says she especially loves cottage cheese because it's a high-protein dairy food that can be added to smoothies for extra thickness or a sauce for a mild flavor and creamy texture.

**Power up your protein:** Cottage cheese tastes great paired with fruit, but you can get creative with it. Try sneaking it into foods that are otherwise low in protein, like a cottage cheese pancake or topped on toast instead of your go-to avocado.

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**Power up your protein:** Whip up a batch of this **wasabi edamame dip** from Living Well Kitchen at the beginning of the week for a hunger-squashing work snack.



# Meditation improves your IQ

**But how?** There are a few reasons, but one of the main ones is that **deep meditation slows brain activity**. As slower brainwaves take over (also known as being in a delta or theta state), the brain increases its own plasticity, or ability to reorganize itself.

**Meditation Reduces Activity in the Brain's "Me Center"**

One of the most interesting studies in the last few years, carried out at **Yale University**, found that mindfulness meditation decreases activity in the default mode network (DMN), the brain network responsible for mind-wandering and self-referential thoughts — a.k.a., "monkey mind." The DMN is "on" or active when we're not thinking about anything in particular, when our minds are just wandering from thought to thought. Since mind-wandering is typically associated with being less happy, ruminating, and worrying about the past and future, it's the goal for many people to dial it down. Several studies have shown that meditation, through its quieting effect on the DMN, appears

to do just this. And even when the mind does start to wander, because of the new connections that form, meditators are better at snapping back out of it.

**Meditation Helps Preserve the Aging Brain**

Last week, a study from **UCLA** found that long-term meditators had better-preserved brains than non-meditators as they aged. Participants who'd been meditating for an average of 20 years had more grey matter volume throughout the brain — although older meditators still had some volume loss compared to younger meditators, it wasn't as pronounced as the non-meditators. "We expected rather small and distinct effects located in some of the regions that had previously been associated with meditating," said study author Florian Kurth. "Instead, what we actually observed was a widespread effect of meditation that encompassed regions throughout the entire brain."

**Its Effects Rival Antidepressants for Depression, Anxiety**

A review study last year —Continued on page 7



The *New England Journal of Medicine* says you must meditate for a minimum of 12 to 15 minutes at a time to get the health benefits of it. That's not very long. In fact, the more research that is done on meditation, the more apparent it is that it's not about doing it for hours at a time—it's just about doing it regularly.



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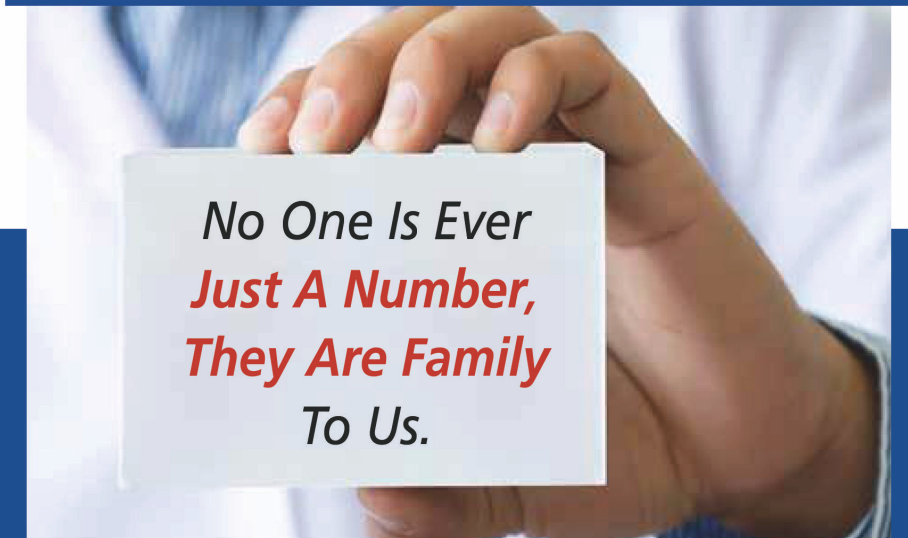
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