How to:
Pick the Right Protein Powder

We need 9 essential amino acids to maintain and build muscle

They are referred to as proteins and as we age eating the recommended 1-2 grams of protein per kg of bodyweight per day can be a challenge

Protein powder is an effective method of consuming protein but there are many variants on the market

This Guide will cover:

- What are the 9 essential amino acids
- The range of protein powder types available
- Which are suitable for vegetarians and vegans
- The pros and cons of each type
- Pro tips to look for when selecting a protein powder

The 9 essential amino acids

Histidine
Important for: Growth, tissue repair, and making histamine (immune response, digestion, sleep-wake cycles).

Isoleucine *(a branched-chain amino acid, or BCAA)*
Important for: Muscle metabolism, immune function, haemoglobin production, and energy regulation.

Leucine *(BCAA)*
Important for: Muscle protein synthesis (muscle building), recovery, and energy during exercise.

Lysine
Important for: Collagen formation, calcium absorption, immune function, and hormone production.

Methionine
Important for: Starting protein synthesis, producing cysteine (used in antioxidants like glutathione), and liver detoxification.

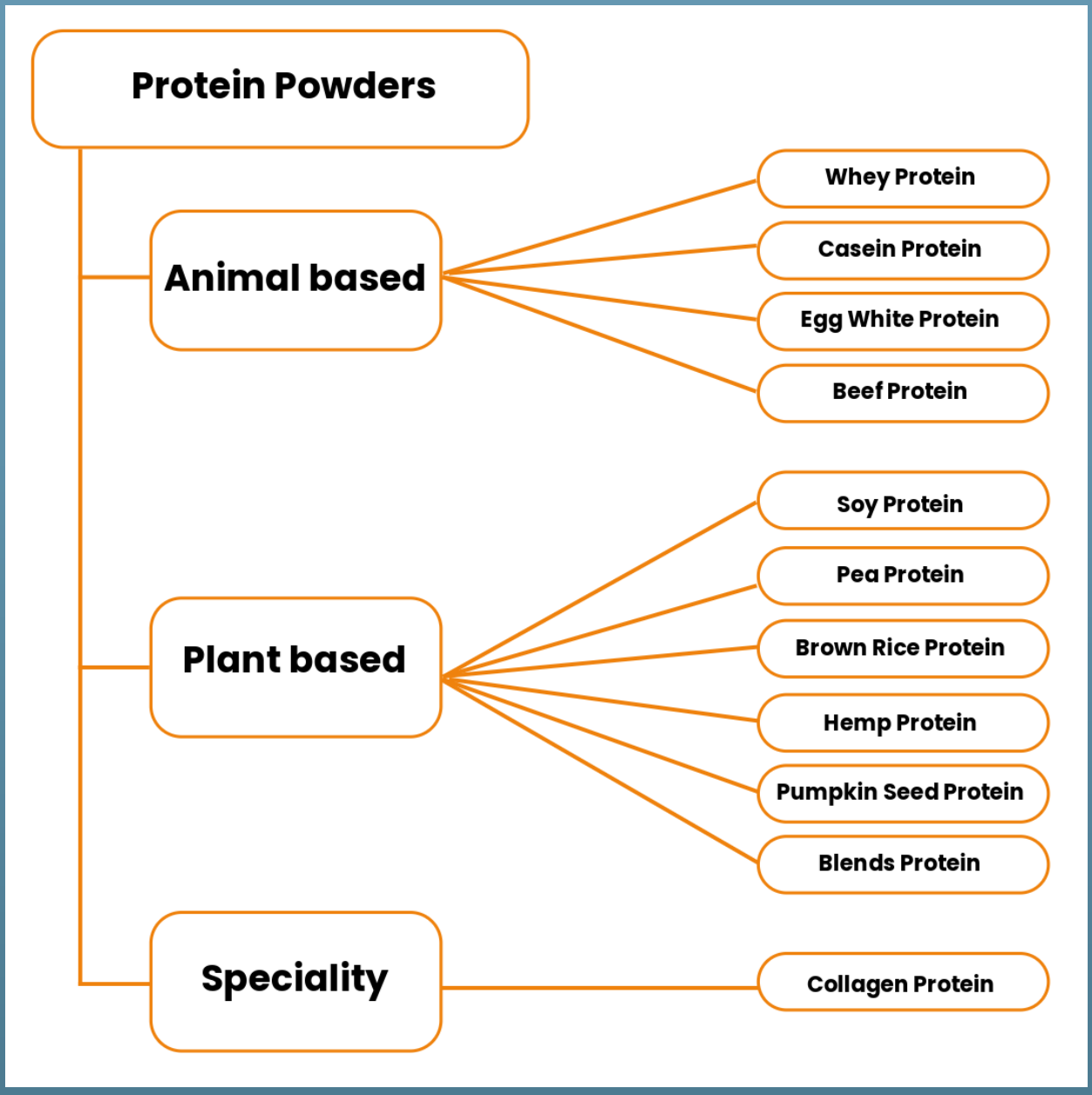
Phenylalanine
Important for: Producing neurotransmitters like dopamine, norepinephrine, and epinephrine.

Threonine
Important for: Collagen and elastin synthesis, immune function, and fat metabolism.

Tryptophan
Important for: Producing serotonin (mood regulation), melatonin (sleep), and niacin (vitamin B3).

Valine *(BCAA)*
Important for: Muscle growth, tissue repair, and energy production.

3 Groups with 11 Options



All nutrition preferences are covered

	Carnivore	Pescetarian	Vegetarian	Vegan
Whey Protein	✓	✓	✓	
Casein Protein	✓	✓	✓	
Egg White Protein	✓	✓	✓	
Beef Protein	✓			
Soy Protein	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pea Protein	✓	✓	✓	✓
Brown Rice Protein	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hemp Protein	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pumpkin Seed Protein	✓	✓	✓	✓
Blends Protein	✓	✓	✓	✓
Collagen Protein	✓	Only marine version		

Animal Protein – Pros & Cons

Whey Protein

Source: A byproduct of cheese production (from milk).
Types:

1. *Whey Concentrate*: 70–80% protein, contains some fat and lactose.
2. *Whey Isolate*: 90%+ protein, minimal fat and lactose (good for lactose-sensitive people).
3. *Whey Hydrolysate*: Pre-digested for faster absorption.

Pros: Fast-digesting, rich in essential amino acids (especially leucine), great for muscle recovery.
Cons: Not suitable for vegans or those with dairy allergies.

Casein Protein

Source: Milk protein (the other major component besides whey).
Pros: Slow-digesting, releasing amino acids over several hours. Ideal before bed to support overnight muscle repair.
Cons: Dairy-based, so not suitable for vegans or those with lactose intolerance.

Egg White Protein

Source: Egg whites, dried and powdered.
Pros: High-quality, complete protein with no fat or lactose.
Cons: More expensive than whey, and digestion speed is moderate.

Beef Protein

1. **Source**: Hydrolysed beef or beef isolate.
2. **Pros**: Lactose-free, high in collagen.
3. **Cons**: May lack some essential amino acids in comparison to whey.

Plant Protein – Pros & Cons

Soy Protein

Source: Defatted soybean flakes.
Pros: Complete plant protein (contains all essential amino acids).
Cons: Contains phytoestrogens (which some people prefer to avoid); not suitable for those with soy allergies.

Pea Protein

Source: Yellow split peas.
Pros: Hypoallergenic, rich in branched-chain amino acids (BCAAs), easy to digest.
Cons: Not a complete protein (low in methionine). Often blended with rice or hemp.

Brown Rice Protein

Source: Processed brown rice.
Pros: Easily digestible, hypoallergenic.
Cons: Low in lysine, so not a complete protein.

Hemp Protein

Source: Ground hemp seeds.
Pros: Contains omega-3 fatty acids, fibre, and minerals.
Cons: Lower protein content per serving and not a complete amino acid profile.

Pumpkin Seed Protein

Source: Ground pumpkin seeds.
Pros: High in magnesium, iron, and zinc.
Cons: Amino acid profile may be incomplete.

Blends

Combines pea, rice, hemp, and/or other plant proteins to create a complete amino acid profile.

Speciality Protein – Pros & Cons

Collagen Protein

Source: Animal connective tissue (often bovine or marine).

Pros: Supports skin, joints, and connective tissue health.

Cons: Not a complete protein (lacks typtophan), less effective for muscle building. This is focused on skin and connective tissue not muscle.

Pro tips

#1 First priority is to select a version with all 9 amino acids. Select any Animal source or Soy and Combined if you prefer not to consume animal products.

#2 If you are lactose intolerant select a version that minimises this to avoid digestive issues. Use Whey Isolate, Beef protein or plant protein if you are lactose intolerant.

#3 Be focused on the macros and calories. Aim to be getting 20 grams of protein per scoop but with calories around 120 kcals. Some powders are lower in protein and higher in calories.

#4 If you intend to add it to smoothies, yoghurt or fortify recipes pick a vanilla flavour. If you are drinking it by itself pick a flavour you enjoy. The best flavours are usually chocolate, banana and salted caramel.

#5 Use a blender to mix it. The consistency from the blender is like a thick shake, rather than water with lumps in it which you get from manual protein shaker mixing cups.

#6 It's a supplement not a meal replacement. Use it once a day to boost protein intake while still getting most of the protein and nutrients from whole natural food.

#7 Collagen protein is not for muscle building and maintenance.

#8 If you are controlling calories and want a desert or snack, chocolate protein powder is a great option to get a chocolate hit.

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Contact us

nigel.issa@longevityperformancecoaching.com

www.longevityperformancecoaching.com