Dear Alice,

Is egg powder an effective egg substitute for protein?

?Yolking it Up

Answer

Dear Yolking it Up,

Egg powder is usually simply dehydrated eggs, a substitute that people may use when they're camping, or in other situations where there is a lack of refrigeration. Egg powder may also be added to some cake mixes, pancake mixes, and the like, so that the home baker doesn't have to add whole eggs to the mix. A large egg contains about 6 grams of high quality protein, making both eggs and egg powder good sources of protein. Eggs are also an important source of vitamins B12 and E, riboflavin, folacin, iron, and phosphorus. These make it one of nature's near perfect foods, except for the cholesterol ? its yolk contains a significant portion of the total daily maximum intake of cholesterol.

Many people experiment with egg whites in order to lower the cholesterol content of their favorite recipes. There are numerous egg substitutes on the market, which come in frozen, refrigerated, and powdered form (this may be what you are referring to in your question). Most of the substitutes have egg whites as their main ingredient. The white of the egg is almost pure protein, containing a near complete balance of complementary amino acids. So, these substitutes are definitely a good source of protein, but not of fat or cholesterol, or B vitamins and minerals.

With the variety of egg substitutes on the market, it's important to read the label carefully. Some have vegetable oil, flavoring, or color added to give the effect of yolk. Other products contain no eggs at all, and are intended to be used in baked products to produce the leavening effect, but would taste terrible as scrambled eggs. The products range in caloric content from 15 to 60 calories per serving, as compared with about 80 calories for a whole egg. Most have little or no cholesterol, but some contain as much as 4 gms of fat per serving.

The American Heart Association recommends limiting average daily cholesterol intake to less than 300 milligrams. If you have heart disease, the recommendation drops to less than 200 milligrams daily. It may make sense to consult with a nutritionist or your health care provider if you already have elevated levels of cholesterol.
As with many foods, moderation is the key to getting "eggs-actly" what is best for your health.

Alice!
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