

# Harbinger's column

## Protein: your body's essential girder set

Protein is a basic building block of all living matter on earth. The protein molecules are the fundamental structural component of the cell nucleus and protoplasm. Nineteen percent of the human body's weight is protein. Forty-five percent of this is muscle, 18 percent bone, 10 percent skin.

The rest makes up blood hormones and fluids.

Protein is made up of amino acids. All but eight of these can be produced by the body, but the eight that cannot be produced by the body are called the essential amino acids and must be provided by our diet. When we consume protein, the molecules are broken down by the digestive system into amino acids and these acids are sent throughout the body via the circulatory system.

### Bell asks for tuition freeze

By DAVE FULLER

Student loans and grants were the topic of discussion at a meeting at Queen's Park last week. Interested student groups and individuals were on hand at the public hearings staged by the governments Advisory Committee on Financial Assistance for Students.

York's Jay Bell was the author of one of the submissions that drew a lot of interest among government officials.

The three page outline of a 2,000 word brief contained several proposals aimed at removing inequities between different student groups, mainly those who are receiving assistance and those who are not.

The brief recommended immediate freeze on tuition fees as well as roll back on the recent loan ceiling increase announced by Queen's Park. The freeze is intended to make tuition fees fall under federal wage and price controls for the next three years after which a new scheme, indexing fee increases to the cost of living, would be established. Other recommendations in the brief included a suggestion that educational costs be studied with a view to uncovering inefficient spending and disproportionate allotment within the university administrations.

### Whole Earth Days return

Whole Earth Days, a forum for the consideration of planetary responsibility, will be held at York University on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th of February. It is sponsored and supported by the C.Y.S.F., and a number of York colleges, as well as other groups and individuals.

The three day event will take the form of talks, music, theatre, slides, and dance, with main sessions in Curtis Lecture Hall "L", and workshops in various rooms in the Ross building.

The main speakers, from Canada and the USA, are Dr. John Waskom, geologist and moon research scientist for NASA; John and Helen Philbrick, bio-dynamic gardening experts; Alan Hammond, director of a school in the art of living; Jerry Kvasnicka, "new age" journalist and magazine editor; and, George Bullied, an internationally-recognized innovator in community education.

Those interested in further information should contact Dennis Edwards at 105 Ross. Tel.: 667-2515. Home: 884-4285.

There are a number of functions served by protein in the human body.

Proteins provide the essential amino acids necessary to build tissue. Therefore, there is a greatly increased need for protein during infancy, childhood and pregnancy.

Proteins are also used in repairing worn-out body tissue, to produce a source of heat and energy, and to contribute to essential body fluids and secretions.

The plasma proteins in the cell help regulate the movement of body fluids through the cells. One symptom of protein deficiency is edema, or swelling, caused by excessive fluid retention in the body.

Proteins are also important to the body's ability to resist infections. Antibodies are largely made up of protein.

Food proteins are classified as complete or incomplete. A complete protein source provides all the eight essential amino acids needed by the body. Incomplete sources provides only some of these. Animal sources provide the best and most complete proteins. With the exception of brewer's yeast and wheat germ, most vegetable sources are incomplete. However, if vegetables are correctly combined, one can receive complete proteins in a meal.

The Mexican diet of corn and beans combines to produce complete proteins. Beans and rice, bread and cheese, beans and bread are good combinations as

well. Soybeans, peanuts, peas, beans and wheat cereals are good vegetable sources.

Most protein is found combined with carbohydrates and lipids (fats). Egg white is one of the exceptions, it being pure protein.

When dieting, most people want to maximize their protein intake and minimize the carbohydrate and fat consumption. Good sources of protein for dieting are fish, skim

milk, cottage cheese and skim milk cheese.

The processing of food affects the nutritional value of protein. Overheating and pressure cooking may alter or destroy amino acids. In general, it is best to cook proteins at a low temperature.

Protein malnutrition is the most widespread nutritional problem in underdeveloped countries. A lack of protein results in poor bone and

muscle structure and retarded physical and mental development. Anemia and increased susceptibility to infections are serious side-effects.

The most complete and highest quality sources of protein are often unavailable to these people because there is a scarcity of animals or because religious and cultural beliefs prevent use of dairy and meat products.

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