

Scuba Diving Nutrition: Ever wonder what happens to an egg underwater?



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Almost every scuba diver has experienced the underwater egg lesson which demonstrates how pressure at depth confines a peeled raw egg to the shape of its shell. Topside eggs are an excellent source of protein to fuel diving activity. One large egg white is 20 calories packed with nearly four grams of protein, but less than a gram of fat, and a few carbohydrates. Ideally, divers strive for a daily lean protein intake of about 30% of their total calorie consumption. Eggs are affordable, travel easily when boiled and seem to be a universal food found at dive destinations around the globe.

Misnomers about egg nutrition cause many divers to avoid them altogether in an effort to prevent or manage high cholesterol and body fat. Eggs are a complete protein containing all of the essential amino acids utilized in healthy body functions, easy to digest and believed to keep divers feeling full longer than other forms of protein. The yolk which gets the most negative publicity is high in calories and fat, but contains naturally occurring lecithin which is an emulsifier. Divers will benefit from a few yolks a week and can enjoy unlimited egg whites.

Powdered egg protein can also be used in workout and meal replacement drinks. It is often combined with milk protein and is an affordable alternative to whey protein powders.

According to egg.org.nz, "Eggs contain over 11 essential vitamins and minerals."

Vitamins and Minerals:

Eggs contain over 11 essential vitamins and minerals, including;

Selenium (antioxidant which protects our body and immune system)

Folate (for growth and maintenance of healthy cells)

Pantothenic acid (Vitamin B5) (releases energy from our food for our body to use)

Vitamin B12 (for brain and nervous system functions and blood formation)

Vitamin A (for growth and eye health)

Iodine (to ensure proper function of our thyroid gland)

Vitamin E (antioxidant to protect our bodies against disease)

Phosphorous (helps build strong bones and teeth)

Iron (to produce haemoglobin which carries oxygen around our bodies)

Thiamine (to turn carbohydrates into energy our body can use)

Zinc (helps in growth, wound healing, blood formation and maintenance of tissues)

Vitamin D (important in bone health)

Antioxidants

Eggs contain the antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin, which are thought to be protective in the

prevention of eye disease.

Fats

A large egg contains about 5 grams of fat – roughly 1.5g saturated and 2.5g unsaturated. The fat in eggs supply energy and contain fat-soluble vitamins.

Eggs are also a source of omega 3 fatty acids.

Egg Yolks

Egg yolks are full of goodness because it is specially designed to be the food source for a baby chick and contains all of the egg's fat and a little less than half of the protein. All of the egg's vitamins A, D and E are in the yolk and egg yolks are one of the few foods naturally containing vitamin D (the sunshine vitamin).

The only vitamins you'll find more of in the egg white are riboflavin and niacin. The yolk also contains more phosphorus, manganese, iron, iodine, copper, and calcium than the white, and it contains all of the zinc. The yolk of a Large egg contains about 59 calories.

When eggs are used in cooking, the yolk is responsible for the egg's emulsifying or blending properties.

Biotin

Biotin is one of the B vitamins, which play an important role in cell metabolism, and the utilisation of fats, proteins and carbohydrates.

Calcium

One Large egg provides 3% of the Recommended Daily Intake (RDI) for calcium, most of which is contained in the yolk. Calcium's major role is in building and maintaining bones and teeth. It is also essential for many other body functions related to the blood, nerves and muscles. The eggshell is composed largely of calcium carbonate (about 94%) and contains about 2 grams of calcium. It also contains small percentages of magnesium carbonate and

calcium phosphate.

- See more at: <http://www.eggs.org.nz/health-nutrition/what-do-eggs-contain.html#sthash...>

For more information on fitness and nutrition for scuba diving visit: www.scubafit.com.