

Textured Vegetable Protein

Textured vegetable protein is an easy-to-use soy food made from whole or defatted soy flour, or less commonly, from soy concentrates or isolates. The soy is then texturized through an extrusion process and formed into granules or chunks of varying sizes. When cooked, the texture is similar to meat. These nutritious nuggets are sold under a variety of names – textured soy protein, textured vegetable protein, textured soy flour, TSP[®] (a registered trademark of PMS Foods LP), and TVP[®] (a registered trademark of Archer Daniels Midland Company).

TVP Nutrition

TVP provides all the nutrition of the whole soybean except for the fat. Because granule size differs from brand to brand, a half-cup measure of one product will not always be exactly equivalent to a half cup of another product. Always check the nutrition facts label of the product you purchase. In general, however, any textured vegetable protein will have a nutrient profile similar to that of TVP[®], which is given here:

	calories	protein	fat	carbohydrate	fiber	isoflavones
1 cup	252	50 g	0	28 g	16 g	138 mg
1 tablespoon	16	3 g	0	2 g	1 g	9 mg

Buying TVP

TVP is a dry product that usually comes as small, yellowish granules, but occasionally you may find larger chunk sizes or TVP colored and flavored to resemble meat. The instructions and recipes on this sheet are for the small, dry TVP granules. The “textured soy protein” listed as an ingredient on the labels of some soy burgers, crumbles, and other packaged soy foods is similar nutritionally but it contains additional ingredients and the process for cooking with it at home is different.

Look for TVP in the bulk bins of the natural foods section of a supermarket or health food store. At home, store the dry TVP in an airtight container on the shelf.

Not all grocers carry TVP. Fortunately, TVP in a variety of flavors and chunk sizes is readily available through mail order. These companies carry many TVP products:

The Mail Order Catalog, www.healthy-eating.com, (800) 695-2241
Dixie Diners Club, www.dixiediner.com, (800) 233-3668

Rehydrating TVP

TVP is a dry product that usually requires rehydration. The basic rehydration technique is simple. Pour a little less than 1 cup boiling water over 1 cup dry TVP and let it sit until the water is completely absorbed, about 5 minutes. You can use hot broth, stock, or tomato juice instead of water and the TVP will absorb the flavor. You can add dry TVP directly to soups and stews and it will soak up some of the cooking liquid as the dish simmers.

Tips for Using TVP

- Add dry TVP to chili, soups, stews, and tomato sauces. It will soak up the flavors and give the meal a nutritional boost.
- Use TVP as a meat extender. Replace up to one fourth of the meat in your favorite meatloaf or burger recipe with rehydrated TVP. Most people will not notice the difference.
- TVP can replace half or even all of the ground meat in spicy foods like tacos.
- Take TVP along on hiking and camping trips. It does not need refrigeration, is very lightweight, and cooks quickly. Seasoning packets of spaghetti sauce, taco sauce, or sloppy joe mix combine beautifully with TVP for hearty outdoor meals.

Game Day Chili

Seasonings:

2 Tbsp. ground cumin
2 Tbsp. chili powder
1 tsp. unsweetened cocoa powder
1-1/2 tsp. ground coriander
1 tsp. dried oregano
1 tsp. sugar
1 tsp. salt

2 Tbsp. vegetable oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 medium green bell pepper, chopped
1-1/2 cups tomato juice
3 cups vegetable or beef broth
1-1/4 cups dry TVP
1 14.5-oz. can diced tomatoes
2 15-oz. cans black beans, rinsed and drained
2 15-oz. cans kidney beans, rinsed and drained
Condiments (optional): grated cheese, chopped onions, diced avocado, sliced black olives

- Mix all the seasonings in a small bowl. Set aside.
- Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onions and sauté until golden. Add garlic, bell pepper, and seasoning mixture and sauté for another minute.
- Add the remaining ingredients (except condiments) and mix well. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, for at least 15 minutes to let the flavors blend.
- Serve with the optional condiments, if desired.

Yield: 8 servings

Serving size: 1-1/2 cups

Per serving: 229 calories, 17 g pro (7.7 g soy pro), 33 g carb, 5 g fat (0.6 g sat fat)

Exchanges: 1-1/2 lean meat, 2 starch

Italian Meatballs

1/2 cup dry TVP, rehydrated with 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce and 6 Tbsp. boiling water
1 lb. lean ground beef
1/2 cup seasoned dry breadcrumbs
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1 large egg, beaten
1/2 medium onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tbsp. dried parsley
2 tsp. Italian herb seasoning or oregano
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. fennel seed, crushed (optional)
1/2 tsp. ground black pepper or 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
2 Tbsp. oil
1 26-oz. jar marinara sauce or 3 cups homemade

- In a large bowl, combine the rehydrated TVP, ground beef, breadcrumbs, Parmesan cheese, egg, onion, garlic, parsley, Italian herb seasoning, salt, optional fennel seed, and pepper. Gently form the meat mixture into golf ball-size meatballs.
- Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the meatballs and cook, turning occasionally, until well browned on all sides, about 6 minutes. Remove meatballs from the skillet and set aside.
- Drain the oil and wipe out the skillet. Return the meatballs to the skillet and pour in the marinara sauce. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, and simmer, covered, swirling the pan occasionally, until the meatballs are cooked through, about 15 minutes.
- Serve immediately on spaghetti, or on hero rolls for sandwiches.

Yield: 24 meatballs

Serving size: 3 meatballs with sauce

Per serving: 286 calories, 19 g pro (3.1 g soy pro), 17 g carb, 16 g fat (6.0 g sat fat)

Exchanges: 1 starch, 2 lean meat, 2 fat, 1/2 vegetable

Recipes from *Textured Vegetable Protein in the American Kitchen*, which may be ordered at the ICSF website

Illinois Center for Soy Foods • www.soyfoodsillinois.uiuc.edu

