

Leucine (symbol Leu or L) is an essential [aminoacid](#) that is used in the biosynthesis of proteins. Leucine is an α -amino acid, meaning it contains an α -amino group (which is in the protonated $-\text{NH}_3^+$ form under biological conditions), an α -carboxylic acid group (which is in the deprotonated $-\text{COO}^-$ form under biological conditions), and a side chain isobutyl group, making it a non-polar aliphatic amino acid. It is essential in humans, meaning the body cannot synthesize it: it must be obtained from the diet. Human dietary sources are foods that contain protein, such as meats, dairy products, soy products, and beans and other legumes. In the genetic code, it is encoded by the six codons UUA, UUG, CUU, CUC, CUA, and CUG.

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