The Role of Supplements in Bodybuilding

In a nutshell, dietary supplements help us get all the necessary nutrients needed for building lean muscle mass. When combined with a good diet, they can improve your training performance and results. However, there are some big truths and even bigger lies about supplements. While experts agree that vitamin or mineral supplementation is beneficial in our diets, they also point out that they are supplements, not replacements, and that they should fill in the nutrient gaps, not take over our diet.

Secondly, supplements are of little use if you don’t push hard in the gym. The same goes if you are feasting and overeating three times a day. In other words, you should make everything else right before supplements enter the scene. This includes regular training, proper diet, and enough recovery period and sleep.

Dietary Supplements, Supplement Food

Dietary supplements are not designed as a substitute for food. They simply cannot replace all the nutrients that whole foods contain. They can patch nutrient holes here and there, but the true power lies on the plate, not in the powder. There’s no doubt that whole foods are the best source of nutrients, as they contain phytochemicals, fibers, and other elements that contribute to good health. They simply cannot be simulated with a pill or a supplement powder.

Supplements and Health

Supplementation is a great way of boosting nutrients like calcium, potassium, vitamin D, and vitamin B12, which modern lifestyle and popular foods often fail to contain. In this case, vitamin and mineral supplements are helping the body alleviate nutrient deficiency and reduce the risk of chronic medical conditions. And while it’s true that you can build a good body based on proper diet like guys did back in the 50, it’s much more time consuming, and it requires regular tours to the supermarket. For bodybuilders, supplements are the more convenient way of ingesting enough muscle-building nutrients.

Fibers

Fiber has many advantages in maintaining normal cholesterol levels. It regulates the amount of cholesterol our body absorbs from food. Fruits, vegetables, grains, and legumes are natural sources of fiber. And while, as always, it’s better to ingest fibers directly from food, you can enhance fiber intake by 25 to 30g of fibers from supplements. Psyllium husk, which is a common ingredient in fiber supplements, is known to reduce the level of bad LDL cholesterol while raising good HDL cholesterol.

Creatine

The role of creatine monohydrate supplements is to boost the creatine level in you muscle tissue. The level of creatine phosphate in muscles is directly related to the amount of weight you can lift and your ability to perform short-term maximum strength reps. High-intensity anaerobic workout performance can be increased by creatine supplementation.

Glutamine

This amino acid makes up over 61% of your skeletal muscle. Its benefits include improving immune function, which is crucial for athletes in high-intensity training. It was also shown that glutamine may prevent muscle catabolism. Glutamine supplements are believed to boost the amount of growth hormone levels.

BCAA

The group of branch chained amino acids consists of valine, leucine, and iso-leucine. These amino acids are compounds that your body cannot generate, so their level must be increased through diet and supplements like casein protein. Not only has BCAA supplementation shown better results in gaining strength and muscle mass, but it is also essential for energy production during workouts, while reducing post-exercise muscle soreness.

Editor’s Note:

Creatine is hard on the kidneys. There’s much debate about this, but it’s a fact. This is why creatine is known to cause flatulence. Do not take creatine if you have any kidney related health issues. Other supplements commonly taken by body builders are typically acidic and toxic to the body, but the supplements mentioned above can be purchased from qaulity companies. I recommend you avoid bodybuilding supplements from body building companies.

Also, when body building, be sure to eat an alkaline diet. No matter how much protein you feel you need, if you’re eating an acidic diet full of refined foods and factory farmed meats, your body will stay sore longer. Speed up recovery time by eating a diet that is balanced with lots of produce and healthy fats. When the body is healthy, bodybuilding is easier

and much more beneficial for overall health.

Recommended Supplements:

- Shillington’s Total Nutrition Formula (Perfect source of protein with vitamins and minerals)
- Hemp Protein & Fiber Powder (Additional protein and a great fiber)
- Arctic Cod Liver Oil (Get some vitamin D and omega 3s for better muscle recovery)
- Liquid Light (Mineralize the body and balance the pH while supporting vitamin bioavailability)
- Bio-Gest (For anyone eating large amounts of meat at a time)

Further Reading:

- *80% Raw Food Diet*
- *Total Nutrition – Make your own Homemade Multivitamin and Mineral Formula*
- *The Vegan Bodybuilder*
- *What to Expect When You Hire a Personal Trainer*
- *Training and Your Heart Rate*

Sources:

- *Casein Protein Powder* – Supplement Empire
- *Branched-chain amino acid supplementation does not enhance athletic performance but affects muscle recovery and the immune system* – NCBI
- *Health Benefits of Dietary Fiber* – NCBI