

SOY: The New Anabolic Protein

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In the old days, protein supplements often tasted bad and were hard to use. Today, the newer protein fortified supplements on the market are just unbelievable. They taste great, are easy to use and best yet, they have multiple uses and benefits. They are made in a variety of forms that are great as a meal replacement, snack or post-workout anabolic drink, and they contain a wide array of lean mass promoting agents that are a “must-have” in any serious exercise nutrition strategy.

As a matter of fact, a diet void of protein will result in malnutrition, disease and ultimately, death. Scary isn't it? Protein provides the indispensable element nitrogen to our body. Nitrogen is a basic requisite for life. As you may recall from grade school, we were all taught how the plant and human worlds interact with each other. Plants “breathe” out oxygen; we breathe oxygen in, and in return expel carbon dioxide out, which plants then breathe in. Animals and plants sustain each other's life. The key link between animal and plant life is nitrogen. Both need nitrogen to grow and sustain life.

There are many sources of protein. Each different source of protein is rated or scored for its ability to be absorbed and utilized by the body. High quality proteins are easily absorbed and utilized by the body.

Protein sources can be individual or complementary. For example, if a protein supplement contains whey (isolate, concentrate or hydrolysate) it is good, if the product also contains a soy isolate, it may be even better (synergy of whey plus soy).

Protein Primer



Soy protein isolate is truly under and unappreciated by those into health, fitness and bodybuilding. There is a wrongful male fear (irrational belief) that since soy contains phytoestrogens (plant sourced estrogen) that it will have an anti-testosterone effect in men. **The data simply prove that to be wholly without merit and in fact, false.**

Did you know that a recent study found that soy was just as effective as whey for inducing (aiding) in muscle gains when combined with weight training? This study found that for people who trained with weights four times per week (split body-type routine) and supplemented daily with a total of 50 grams of protein (whey, soy or a combination of the two), that the gains in muscle mass over a 12-week period were significant in all three groups.

Better yet, there were no negative changes in any of the male or female hormone levels from soy supplementation. Interestingly enough, the group that received the whey plus soy actually had a significant **increase** in the testosterone to estradiol ratio (meaning that more bioavailable testosterone was the result).

The take home is simple, whey plus soy delivers greater biochemical benefit while having at least equal physiological benefit to the person who lifts weights. You may already know that whey protein contains agents which support the immune system, support healthy cholesterol levels, support thyroid function, enhance vascular tone, reduce the risk of heart disease in addition to supporting the accretion of lean body mass (muscle).

The science also tells us that soy protein reduces the risk of heart disease, enhances bone density (especially important for women), supports muscular growth, aids in dieting and helps to keep you feeling

full. We know from more than one well-designed study that when soy protein isolate is combined with whey, the benefits are increased. Muscle reacts positively to the exercise plus supplementation, health is promoted throughout the body, and the user feels satisfied so he doesn't overeat.

Additionally, soy protein is rich in branched chain amino acids (of which leucine is a key regulator for muscular growth), arginine (bolsters growth hormone levels) and glutamine, which is great for the immune system and for athletic recovery.

The Take Home

Whey protein is a great healthy ingredient in a protein supplement. Adding soy protein isolate enhances whey protein, especially for increasing the testosterone to estradiol ratio in men. If gaining or maintaining muscle mass is important to you, the combination of whey and soy is one proven protein combination for supporting this goal. In addition, numerous weight control (weight loss or satiety) studies have found that whey or soy can be beneficial for helping to maintain blood sugar, enhancing the feeling of fullness, supporting the hormones that regulate appetite and most importantly, maintaining muscle.

REFERENCES

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