

Protein Supplements - What Type of Protein Supplement Is Right For You?

By, Scott Sherwood, Scott Sherwood Personal Training – London, England www.ScottSherwood.com

Beginners please read this – it will save you a lot of money!! Protein is one of the most over-consumed over-hyped supplements out there. NOTHING will ever replace a good solid meal so make sure that you have a good diet. Remember, these are supplements – NOT meal replacements.

Beginners you don't have to worry about protein supplements yet. Make sure you are training right, eating right and getting plenty of rest. After passing this stage, you may need increased amounts of protein. Even at the most advanced level, you should take no more than two protein shakes per day. The rest should come from solid food.

The four main types of protein available are soy, whey, casein and egg protein. Consider each one....

Soy Protein

Soy protein is derived from soy beans. Soy is the only "complete" protein that is a plant product-versus meat proteins. Soy may be detrimental to males who supplement with it due to the correlation between it and increased estrogen levels. Soy is considered a complete protein due to it contains all the essential amino acids for human nutrition.

Whey Protein

A high quality protein derived from milk. It is abundant in muscle building amino acids. Whey is digested quickly, which can lead to rapid, but short lived spikes in amino acid levels and can lead to an increase in muscle protein synthesis.

Casein Protein

Also a high quality protein that is derived from milk and is abundant in amino acids. Casein is more slowly digested than whey, which seems to inhibit protein breakdown, as compared to the faster digestion of whey.

Egg Protein

Egg protein is an alternative to the milk based proteins and the soy based. There are some perspectives out there who believe that all dairy products should be avoided by both childhood and adult populations due to a correlation to hormone levels and our nationwide obesity crisis. As result of these perspectives, one may consider supplementing with egg protein.

If you want to increase your protein consumption, then focus on lean proteins: chicken, turkey, fish, and lean red meat. But, if you after you've taken the time to analyze your diet and your energy needs, then you may need to supplement protein-potentially pre and post workouts. But, which of the above proteins are going to be most beneficial to you and at what time of your nutrition program?

Since casein is slowly digested and whey is a fast digesting protein, both should be considered for supplementing but at different times in the day. Due to the slow digestion process of casein, research leads us to believe that casein will be more beneficial if consumed at bedtime-this will aid in evenly distributing the protein over the eight hours that you sleep. Remember, sleep is essential to growth and recovery-if you want to get stronger, bigger, faster, fitter, etc. you need a minimum of 7-9 hours.

Whey, on the other hand, is easily digested and broken down into the blood stream. As a result, it is recommend that whey be consumed pre or post exercise, where the results can be quickly consumed and aid in replacing protein stores used during intense exercise. Whey becomes even more productive in supplement form when combined with a carbohydrate supplement (general rule of thumb is 2/3 carbs and 1/3 protein). Now is the time to add that banana, oats, wheat germ etc. to your shake.

As for soy and egg, when compared to the other two, it should be your last option of those listed due to amino acid content and protein synthesis. The protein synthesizing capabilities are considerable less than that of the milk based protein sources. But, if you are lactate intolerant (milk sensitivity) then soy (if you are a female) or egg could be good alternatives.

Remember this fact: the liver can only process 11 grams of protein per hour. Any more gets sent straight to your kidneys for removal. Money, literally, down the drain!