



Whey protein's valuable role in developing lean muscle

Rebecca Prescott 29 Jun 2012

Whey protein — a complete, high-quality dairy protein — has all of the amino acids necessary to build and maintain lean muscle, according to a new study.

A study presented recently at the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) Annual Meeting found whey protein to be more effective in developing lean muscle when compared with soy protein.

Vikki Nicholson, senior vice president of global marketing for USDEC, said: "Consumers are looking to their food and beverages not just for great taste, but to support a healthy lifestyle too. Whey protein is an ideal dairy ingredient to help meet these demands — it's easy to digest and a complete protein providing one of the best sources of branched-chain amino acids."

Increase in lean muscle mass greater with whey

Volek said: "After completing nine months of resistance training, all participants experienced increases in lean muscle mass. The gains for participants consuming whey protein (3.3kg) were significantly greater than for participants consuming soy protein (1.8 kg) group – potentially due to the branched-chain amino acid content of the whey protein."

Leucine in whey is key

The study builds upon the growing research supporting the value of resistance training combined with whey protein supplementation in building lean muscle. Whey protein naturally contains leucine, a branched-chain amino acid (BCAA) that plays a significant role in muscle maintenance and repair. It cannot be manufactured by the body and must be obtained through foods.

Keigan Park, PhD, director of nutrition research, Dairy Research Institute, said: "Protein is an essential nutrient that plays many important roles in American's diets. Beyond building and repairing muscles it has been found to increase satiety and may combat age-related loss of muscle mass."

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