

[IMAGE]

Dispelling Myths about Strength Training

In the past decade, the popularity of nutritional supplements has grown by leaps and bounds. The supplement craze has reached such a fever pitch that conventional supermarkets now carry many of the same products once reserved only for nutrition marts and health food stores.

Glucose and amino acid supplementation has been lauded by many in the bodybuilding world for its ability to increase muscle protein synthesis following resistance exercise. However, the mechanisms underlying this supposed action remain unsupported by the literature, including this study published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine*.

Seven previously untrained men and women (average age: 23 years) trained on a leg-extension machine for 10 weeks - four sets of 10 repetitions, five days per week. Alternate legs were trained on successive days, and subjects ingested a supplement containing glucose, amino acids, or a neutral placebo on alternate days, immediately after training.

Although serum insulin concentration after supplement ingestion peaked at nine times the placebo level, no significant strength differences were noted between the supplement leg and the placebo leg. The authors suggest: "Athletes and others who wish to gain muscle strength may not benefit by supplementing their workouts in such a manner."

Reference:

Williams A, Oord M, Sharma A, et al. Is glucose/amino acid supplementation after exercise an aid to strength training? *British Journal of Sports Medicine* 2001: Vol. 35, No. 10, pp109-113.

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