

A man with a beard and dark hair is shown in profile, drinking from a white water bottle with a purple lid. He is wearing a dark tank top. The background is a blurred outdoor setting, possibly a park or a public square, with many people in the distance.

Supplements

and Ergogenic Aids

Despite what fitness magazines will tell you, no supplement will make you super muscular or burn fat — they don't work that way.

The purpose of supplements is to fill in any nutritional gaps that may exist in your lifestyle and diet.

Supplements for athletes are classified as ergogenic or performance aids.

Although you do not need to take any supplements, **they can make life a lot easier** for those who have high nutritional demands.

I.e athletes training 2+ times per day or who have full-time jobs/schooling.

Important Note

You do not need to take any supplements to perform well.

However, if you choose not to, you need to ensure you are meeting your energy and nutrient needs from your diet.

99% of supplements on the market are pointless. Like the intro stated, if 'Exotic Muscle Building Program, X-type of pill and HypoLypo 500X' worked as well as their labels claimed, then everyone would be walking around jacked and shredded.

Instead, we have a health, diabetes and obesity epidemic.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) doesn't regulate dietary supplements meaning it can be literally the "Wild West" when it comes to ingredients.

Since the FDA does not regulate supplements, there isn't any need to ensure the ingredients in the container match those on the label.

I insist that, if my athletes take supplements, they take only those that are third-party tested.

These organizations test every batch of a company's supplements to check for banned substances and accurate ingredients. Taking a third-party certified supplement ensures that you're getting safe ingredients, and that supplement won't cause you to test positive during an athletic sanctioned drug test.

Third-party tested supplements tend to be more expensive than non-certified ones because companies have to pay out of pocket for the testing.

In my opinion, spending an extra \$5 on a certified tub of protein is worth every penny for the safety and peace of mind knowing you're taking something safe.

The leaders in third-party supplement testing

NSF Certified For Sport

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Informed Choice

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Additional reputable testing organizations

Labdoor

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Consumer Lab

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What Supplements Do Work?

Not all supplements are a waste of money, and not everyone needs to take a supplement.

You need to examine your own needs, goals and finances to assess what supplements are right for you.

I cannot tell you through this book what you should or should not take.

The only thing I can do is inform you of what works and what doesn't work, as shown in research. I encourage you to do some research on your own surrounding all supplements.

There is a great resource called <https://examine.com/> that breaks down all the information surrounding every supplement ingredient on the market.

The supplements explained in this section are ones that have the highest efficacy towards helping hockey players.

You should always consult with your primary physician before taking a new supplement.

Creatine

Creatine is one of the most researched supplements in human history and for a good reason.

What It Does

Creatine helps by supporting the APT-PCr system (refer to page 57), which can increase strength and power output.

Meaning, that you may be able to hit those extra 1-2 reps of a heavy resistance exercise, like a back squat when supplementing with creatine.

Without creatine, you may not be able to hit those reps.

What Are The Best Sources?

There are several types of creatines out there, from different blends to creatine acids.

There is no evidence supporting one form is better than the others, but **creatine monohydrate** is the most studied and is the gold standard.

What It Won't Do

Creatine won't directly help you gain muscle or lose fat.

It just enables you to generate a little more ATP during short burst, high-intensity exercise.

This extra bit of ATP may help you lift slightly more weight, which over time, can contribute to muscle gain.

What Are The Side Effects?

The only known side effects of creatine are; cramping if taken without sufficient water, and diarrhea if too much is consumed at one time.

There is conflicting evidence in regard to creatine causing water retention/bloating.

Protein

When I talk about protein supplements, I am referring specifically to protein powders. These supplements come from extracting the protein from food sources. Popular sources for protein extraction are dairy, eggs, peas, rice, hemp and beef.

What It Does

Protein supplements allow you to add additional protein into your diet if you are not able to consume enough from food.

What Are The Best Sources?

There isn't "a best" source of protein powder.

Differences occur in dietary restrictions, taste, price and personal preference.

When buying a protein powder, look for one that contains the highest amount of protein with the least amount of other macronutrients or additives.

What It Won't Do

Protein won't directly make you jacked, build muscle or get you shredded.

It will only allow you to meet your daily protein requirements, which can support your performance and body composition goals.

What Are The Side Effects?

There is conflicting evidence surrounding excessive protein intake in healthy individuals. There is no need to take anything more than 2g/lb of bodyweight.

Caffeine

Caffeine is a chemical stimulant, most commonly consumed through coffee and green tea, which helps you feel more alert and energized.

What It Does

Caffeine blocks chemical receptors in the body that make us tired. By blocking these receptors, it causes us to feel more alert, awake and energized.

Feeling more alert and energized can increase your muscular power output.

Caffeine can increase your metabolic rate, and when combined with a caloric deficit, can increase fat loss.

What Are The Best Sources?

There are no best sources of caffeine. Energizing supplements like pre-workouts usually contain a form of a powdered caffeine compound called caffeine anhydrous.

The FDA does not recommend this powdered form due to its higher quantity. If you're going to take caffeine, I suggest consuming it from coffee or tea.

What It Won't Do

Caffeine won't directly make you stronger, add muscle or get you shredded. It works through various mechanisms that can help you exert more power.

When paired with a caloric surplus and a proper resistance training program, it can increase strength and muscle mass. Additionally, caffeine can help you feel more energized and slightly increase metabolic rate, which can result in fat loss when paired with a long term caloric deficit and a proper exercise program.

What Are The Side Effects?

Excessive caffeine can be dangerous. In healthy adults, up to 400mg/day (around 4 cups of coffee) is considered safe.

Exceeding more than 400mg may result in side effects such as increased blood pressure, vomiting, shaking, acid reflux and diarrhea.