

MUSCLE-BUILDING SUPPLEMENT GUIDE

Most supplements are flat-out a waste of your time and money. But there are 5 we highly recommend to help you build muscle. They're not required. But they do help.

These are the same 5 supplements the Scrawny To Brawny coaches use, and the same ones we recommend to our clients.

Liquid fish oil

It's estimated that 95% of people in the U.S are deficient in omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3s have a lot of benefits such as improving insulin sensitivity (which can help with muscle growth), increasing mood and circulation, and controlling and managing inflammation.

Since your body can't naturally create omega-3s, you must get them from food and supplement sources.

Taking liquid fish oil, which contains the powerful omega-3s docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), is an easy way to get your high-quality fats without needing to eat a few pounds of salmon.

OUR FAVORITE BRANDS

- o3mega by Genuine Health
- Carlson's Very Finest Fish Oil

HOW MUCH SHOULD I TAKE?

We recommend starting with 1 gram of fish oil per body fat percentage every day for the first 4 weeks. So, if you're 12% body fat, you'll take 12 grams of fish oil. If you're 8% body fat, you'll take 8 grams of fish oil. And if you're 16% body fat, you'll take 16 grams of fish oil. (You get the idea.)

After those 4 weeks, cut that dose in half.

So if you're 12% body fat and taking 12 grams of fish oil the first four weeks, drop down to 6 grams of fish oil per day.



WHAT'S A GRAM OF FISH OIL LOOK LIKE?

Well, a teaspoon is roughly 5 grams.

That's another reason why we recommend taking liquid fish oil instead of capsules, since one gram of fish oil is equal to about one capsule.

(And who wouldn't rather take a teaspoon or two than pop a handful of pills?)

WHEN SHOULD I TAKE IT?

We recommend splitting your fish oil evenly throughout the day and taking it with meals.

Multivitamin

Since most of us are deficient in one or more vitamins or minerals — approximately 68% of the general population is deficient in calcium, 90% in chromium, 75% in magnesium, and 80% in vitamin B6 — a high-quality multivitamin is a great way to “fill in the gaps” and get the extra vitamins we may not get from food alone.

Vitamins, minerals, and nutrients play a role in normalizing bodily functions and cannot be made by the body alone (except for vitamin D, which we can get from the sun).

That's why we start off all our clients with a basic multivitamin.

OUR FAVORITE BRANDS

- Multi+ by Genuine Health
- Active Easy Multi Plus (Men) by Platinum Naturals
- The Vitamin Code by Garden of Life
- Special Two by NOW

HOW MUCH SHOULD I TAKE?

Follow the instructions on the back of whichever multivitamin you choose. Some you'll take once per day; others you'll take multiple times per day.

WHEN SHOULD I TAKE IT?

If it's a once-per-day capsule, take it in the morning with breakfast. If it's supposed to be taken multiple times per day, pair it with breakfast and a late afternoon snack.

(While these are the recommended times, they're not etched in stone. In other words, just take your multivitamin whenever you remember to take your multivitamin.)

Protein powder

Proteins are the building blocks of muscle and aid in muscle repair, increased energy, and better recovery. Unfortunately, only 75% of us get enough protein every day.

A good protein powder blend can help you reach your protein needs when eating whole food is inconvenient.



OUR FAVORITE BRANDS

- Metabolic Drive by Biotest (milk protein blend)
- Muscle Milk by Cytosport
- Proteins+ by Genuine Health
- Vegan Proteins+ by Genuine Health (for vegetarians and vegans)
- LeanFit Whey Protein by Costco

If you're lactose intolerant or vegan/vegetarian, you can also supplement with rice, hemp, pumpkin seed, or pea protein. We don't recommend soy.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I TAKE?

We recommend taking one to two scoops per day as part of a Super Shake.

WHEN SHOULD I TAKE IT?

Whenever eating whole food is inconvenient, or when you need an extra meal.

Creatine monohydrate

Creatine, the most researched supplement in all of sports science, is a white, tasteless powder that can translate to more strength, muscle, and endurance.

While we all have creatine in our muscles already (about half of which is derived from eating creatine-rich meat), supplementing with creatine can have huge positive effects on your body, the most notable being increasing maximal force production of your muscles. (That means you can lift more weight more explosively.)

One thing to remember: you only want creatine monohydrate. There are other kinds of creatine out there that are simply not as effective.

OUR FAVORITE BRANDS

- Micronized German Creatine by Biotest
- Micronized Creatine by Higher Power
- CreaPURE creatine by ProLab

HOW MUCH SHOULD I TAKE?

We recommend taking 10 grams (2 scoops) of creatine per day.

WHEN SHOULD I TAKE IT?

You can either mix it with green tea (it dissolves better in warm beverages) or include it in your post-workout drink.



Post-workout drink

When you're in the gym you're not actually building muscle — you're tearing it down.

Exercise breaks down our muscle carbohydrate stores and our muscle protein structures. Then our immune system comes in to clean up the mess. Finally, signals are generated to tell our body to rebuild.

A good post-workout drink — a mixture of high-quality protein and fast-acting carbohydrates — is your “re-building material.”

OUR FAVORITE BRANDS

- Surge Recovery by Biotest
- 2:1:1 Recovery by Optimum Nutrition

Be sure to read the label to ensure you're not getting a ton of sugar or other chemical additives you don't need.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I TAKE?

If you're skinny and usually have a hard time putting on muscle, take:

45 g protein, 90 g carbs (520 cal) in 1000 ml of water

(That's 2-3 scoops, by the way.)

WHEN SHOULD I TAKE IT?

The perfect time to take your post-workout shake is actually during the workout (yeah, we know it says “post-workout.”). Our clients mix their workout drink before they head to the gym and drink it during their session. By the end of the session, if they have any left over, they slam it back.

