

Sports Nutrition:

Protein Packed Action



Asia & Japan are the fastest growing markets for sports nutrition products, with convenience and taste in pivotal roles. By **Mark Neville**, marketing manager, Volac

THE sports nutrition market, once regarded as a niche segment, has developed in recent years, opening up a mainstream market that is rapidly expanding.

Among the fastest growing markets for sports nutrition products are Japan and Asia, with product convenience and taste playing a strong role in driving this growth. According to a report by Canadean, Asia accounts for a third of all sports drinks sales worldwide.

Interest in understanding the special nutritional requirements of athletes to gain maximum performance, has spilled over to meeting the needs of ordinary individuals who exercise regularly as part of a general health and fitness programme.

PROTEIN & SPORTS NUTRITION

Protein is the basic building block of muscle, as well as being needed for many critical processes in the body, including the functioning of the brain, heart, liver and the skin.

The International Society of Sport Nutrition maintains that individuals engaged in regular exercise training require more dietary protein.

Its research committee recommends that exercising individuals maintain a regular protein intake at a level of between 1.4 and 2 g/kg/day. This is depending on the nature and intensity of the sport they are engaged in.

For less active lifestyles, 0.8 g/kg/day is generally regarded as adequate protein intake.

Carbohydrates also have a key energy-generation role to play in sports nutrition, but protein is required specifically to feed and protect the muscles.

A 2007 study published in *Applied Physiology, Nutrition and Metabolism* showed that the results of a group of young, resistance-trained men who consumed 10 g of whey protein plus carbohydrates.

It showed that a greater increase in muscle protein synthesis resulted from their resistance training compared to when they consumed a carbohydrate-only beverage.

THE WHEY ADVANTAGE

Whey protein is one of the richest dietary sources of branched chain

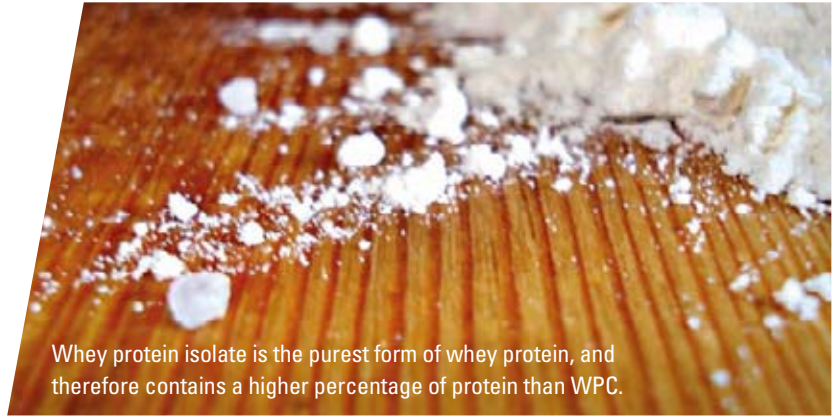
amino acids. This is required daily in the diet to help support the growth, maintenance and repair of muscles, the skin and other organs in the body.

Leucine is one essential amino acid that stands out for its ability to stimulate muscle protein synthesis. Whey protein contains more leucine than any other protein source.

Whey protein has the highest biological value of all protein sources. Biological value is a measure of how effectively the body can use a protein source.

Whey protein is often referred to as a 'fast' protein due to its ability to provide rapid nourishment to help muscles recover after exercise.

Research has shown that after strenuous exercise, our immune system is often weakened and we



Whey protein isolate is the purest form of whey protein, and therefore contains a higher percentage of protein than WPC.

Cindy, USA

are less able to mount a defence against colds and other forms of infection.

Glutamine is a key nutrient for strengthening the immune system and whey protein can promote the synthesis of both glutamine and the antioxidant glutathione. This provides a combined approach to boosting the immune system and

the body's natural defences.

Whey's high amino acid score, high digestibility and neutral taste, combine together to make it a highly favoured and convenient source of protein for those engaging in intense physical activity. Not only does whey have the highest nutritional value of all proteins, it is rightly

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perceived as a completely natural product filtered from milk, as opposed to a highly processed synthetic dietary supplement.

Additionally, for those focusing on shedding kilos as part of a fitness regime, whey protein has been shown to enhance satiety and help retain lean body mass whilst reducing overall weight.

WHEY PROTEIN APPLICATIONS

The composition of whey protein concentrates (WPC) and isolates (WPI) can vary considerably, which can impact their suitability for different food and drink applications.

Whey protein isolate is the purest form of whey protein, and therefore contains a higher percentage of protein than WPC. It has been processed further using a combination of cross flow

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ultra filtration and micro filtration techniques to give a concentration percentage greater than 90.

As the remaining lactose has all but been removed, the isolate offers the highest levels of whey protein with the lowest levels of fat and carbohydrate.

Whey protein has traditionally been offered in ready-to-mix powder form for the end-consumer to mix into a protein drink at home, reconstituting the whey with milk or water. However, with today's fast paced lifestyle, speed and convenience is the name of the game.

MOVING FORWARD

Asian food and drink processors can now capitalise on the functional benefits of whey protein as an essential ingredient for the sports nutrition market through the increasing range of application formats available to them. These offer a convenience and taste advantage for sports professionals and those wanting to enjoy nutrient-dense 'food-on-the-go' as part of an active lifestyle.

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PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS

CARBERY: ISOLAC CLEAR+

Carbery has developed a whey protein isolate for ready-to-drink beverages. Isolac Clear+, is suited to low pH drinks and works with many functional beverages, energy drinks, recovery drinks and high protein muscle building products.

The ingredient also provides opportunities for beverage manufacturers targeting a range of sectors. This includes weight management, sports nutrition, nutrition for the elderly and children's nutrition.

According to the company, Isolac Clear+ provides the high protein content to deliver satiating effects, as well as clarity and a clean taste to maintain consumer appeal.

Enquiry No: P0541



VOLAC: HEAT STABLE ISOLATE

Volactive UltraWhey HS from Volac, is a heat stable isolate that enables beverage manufacturers to add the protein to clear ready-to-drink beverages. This removes the need for the consumer to spend time mixing in protein to drinks.

The company's heat stable ingredient is added at the production stage to clear acidic beverages and dissolves completely to provide absolute clarity and a neutral taste. This means that clear fruit sports drinks can now contain protein, as well as carbohydrate – so giving nutritional balance in a bottle.

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