

Creatine Monohydrate - Athletic Boost or Demise? Tips and Information

Should you use creatine? Creatine is naturally found in the body as creatine and as creatine phosphate. Creatine functions as part of the cell's energy fuel. It is also found in the diet in meat and fish, but one study suggested that it could take over 20 pounds of daily meat to super saturate. I have spoken with many athletic trainers and professional weight lifters about creatine. I have read many scientific articles on muscle contractions and the use of creatine supplementation in the diet, and have used creatine supplements, so rather than go into the organic chemistry of creatine, I wish to just share some of my personal findings from my use and studies. How it works: I will refer to my Biochemistry textbook for a brief answer to this. To meet the demands of a high-intensity exercise, such as a sprint, muscles derive their energy from a series of reactions involving adenosine triphosphate (ATP), phosphocreatine (PCr), adenosine diphosphate (ADP), and creatine. ATP, the amount of which is relatively constant, provides energy when it releases a phosphate molecule and becomes ADP. ATP is regenerated when PCr donates a phosphate molecule that combines with ADP. Stored PCr can fuel the first 4-5 seconds of a sprint, but another fuel source must provide the energy to sustain the activity. Creatine supplements increase the storage of PCr, thus making more ATP available to fuel the working muscles and enable them to work harder before becoming fatigued ¹. Discovered Nearly 200 Years Ago Discovered in 1832 by the French scientist Michel Eugène Chevreul when researching skeletal muscle. He named creatine after the Greek word for flesh, or Kreas. In the late 1920s, after finding that the intramuscular stores of creatine can be increased by ingesting creatine in larger than normal amounts, scientists discovered creatine phosphate, and determined that creatine is a key player in the metabolism of skeletal muscle. My personal experience I tried powder and pill forms, but eventually stayed with the powder form since it is cheaper than the liquid and pill forms. I do not really know if there is truth in the statements that one is better absorbed than the other. I used the product daily, even though I only workout 3-4 times weekly, and I took it before my workouts, as suggested by a trainer. I used a loading phase for the first few weeks, and then a maintenance amount and I felt that I did have more capacity to do more reps in the gym, but this was my personal evaluation and not a double blind placebo effect test, which would have been more accurate. I felt results within one month of using the supplement, along with my whey protein supplement. My Recommendations Creatine taken with a small amount of food reduces the nausea that sometimes happens when taken on an empty stomach. Drinking additional water may be helpful. It has been reported that simultaneous ingestion of creatine with caffeine reduces its effectiveness. Do not use it if you are doing swimming, running, or any other type of exercise where you would NOT want weight gain. There is scientific evidence that taking creatine supplements can marginally increase athletic performance in high-intensity anaerobic conditions. It is fairly cheap if you shop around, and based on my findings, I would recommend that if you really want to try it, that you buy creatine monohydrate instead of creatine ethyl ester. Use Your Head

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