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GET SHREDDED . . . WITH RICE!

In an industry where whey reigns supreme, plant-based alternatives have sprouted to prove their protein prowess. Among a variety of rookies rises an all-star: Rice protein. Bet you never thought you'd see those two words together. But with a convincing amino acid profile and a nearly perfect absorption rate, it's truly a match made in heaven. There is more than one way to build muscle. Now, let's take a walk on the natural side.

PROTEIN GRADE, DIGESTIBILITY & ABSORPTION

The body absorbs approximately 99 percent of rice protein. Look at some baby foods, and you'll see rice is a key ingredient. There is a reason for this. Unlike fast-digesting whey, rice's absorption remains constant, delivering a steady supply of protein to the muscles. "It almost has its own time release," says David Janow, president of Axiom Foods, a leading manufacturer of rice protein.

Axiom produces different grades of rice protein, ranging from 70-90 percent. A greater percentage means greater protein quality and amino acid profile. Most rice supplements are 80-85 percent protein, as they're the most economical to produce. Actual grams of protein absorbed per serving depend on actual grade. For example, 100 grams of 85 percent rice protein yields approximately 84 grams that are absorbable by the body (100 grams x .85 = 85 x .99

rate of digestion equals 84 grams). The remainder is excreted through urine.

STRONG AMINO ACID PROFILE

Take what you've heard about plants not containing essential amino acids and forget it all. Rice protein combines all three layers of a rice grain to form a complete amino acid profile, similar to that of mother's milk. Its protein digestibility corrected amino acid score is 1.00. Eighty-five percent rice protein compares impressively to whey's amino acid profile, containing about four times more arginine – useful for the production of creatine and glutamine, and for improving blood flow to muscles. It is also a rich source of branched chain amino acids, responsible for reducing the breakdown of muscle tissue during periods of physical exertion – namely, intense weight lifting. This translates to more muscle, less breakdown, more efficient workouts and better gains.

ADDITIONAL HEALTH BENEFITS

Recent research suggests that diets containing rice protein increase insulin sensitivity and reduce serum and liver cholesterol levels in rats fed a high-fat, high-cholesterol diet. Another study suggests rice protein inhibits atherosclerosis, an inflammation of the arterial walls promoted by an excess of bad (LDL) cholesterol. It may even fight cancer. Phytochemicals in rice protein have been shown to reduce the incidence of chemically induced mammary tumors in the breast of rats. "There are fractions that we tested that kill cancer cells, or that make cancer cells proliferate less rapidly," says study author Dr. Martin Ronis of the Arkansas Children's Nutrition Center. Studies involving human cells were performed and, although the results have been promising, there is still a need for clinical trials to validate these effects in humans.

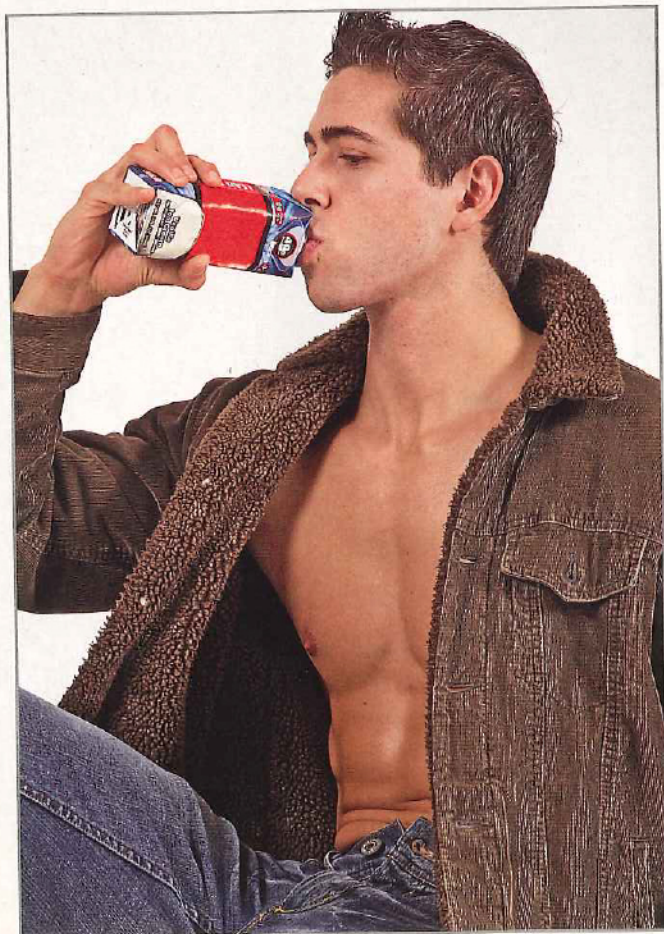
Ronis and his colleagues conducted another study in which reduced bodyweight gain was observed in the offspring of rats fed rice protein as a sole source of protein. "The data suggests that fatty acid metabolism is increased in the liver of rats fed rice protein isolate," Ronis says. "It is possible that this could contribute to the observed decreased weight gain in these animals since it implies that more caloric energy from the diet is being burnt by the liver."

HYPOALLERGENIC PROPERTIES

Rice protein contains no soy, gluten, egg, dairy or wheat, so you have no worries. It is completely vegan, and one of few substances tolerated by those with intensive food sensitivities. "What happens to people in that situation is that they can get severely malnourished and protein deficient," says Professor David Wolfe, a leading authority on nutrition. "One of the foods they can eat is rice, and that situation is almost lifesaving." Wolfe works as a health advocate for SunFood, a distributor of raw and organic products in North America. Excessive exposure to a particular food may actually increase your risk of developing an allergy to it. How often do you take whey? If you don't tolerate it as well as you used to, perhaps it's time to rotate in another protein source.

WHEY AND RICE: MEGA MUSCLE

So you want to begin using rice *(continued on page 135)*



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NUTRITION

(continued from page 50)

protein, but wish to keep using whey? Substitute or add half a scoop of rice protein to your existing whey protein shake. They complement each other beautifully; whey will deliver that rapid surge of protein you're used to and the rice protein will keep the protein pumping throughout your workout. And you'll get an even greater supply of amino acids. A single powder containing both proteins has been developed and should soon be available on the consumer market.

YOUR BUYING GUIDE

Nutribiotic (nutribiotic.com) and Sun Warrior (sunwarrior.com) produce 80 and 85 percent rice protein, respectively. In my personal taste tests, both go down smooth, leaving no aftertaste. Nutribiotic has a milder flavor than Sun Warrior, which is sweetened with Stevia. Chocolate and vanilla powders can be mixed with milk alternatives, such as rice, oat, almond and soy milk to make for a muscle milk shake. Plain, unflavored powders are best mixed with juice and berries to make a power-packed fruit punch. The Sun Warrior brand is pricier at \$48.95 for 2.2 lbs. (47 servings); however, take one look at the

amino acid profile and you'll see you're getting what you pay for.

One would never have guessed a plant protein would ever match wits with whey. Now, a month into my research, I'm sold. I supplement with rice protein twice daily. It coincides with my vegetarian lifestyle, and I feel great. Variety is the spice of life. Next time you visit the supplement store, walk in with an open mind, and possibly walk out with a new kind of protein. **E-1**

References available upon request.

FITNESS QUICK TIPS

(continued from page 30)

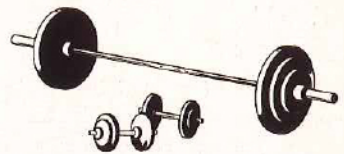
for healthy snacks and meals you enjoy.

#8. Make an office-wide fitness challenge. See if you can get your boss to throw in a bonus to the employee with the fastest finishing time in a local 5K. It is a chance to have the company do something together outside of the workplace, encouraging bonding (your boss will love that), as well as a chance to make everyone in the office more health-conscious. To make a long-

term investment in his staff's health, see if your boss will get a company-wide discount on memberships to your local gym.

It is not easy to stick to eating healthy and frugally in the workplace. Cookies will be baked and brought. Lunches at hip restaurants will pop up. But with some creativity and determination, you can achieve your goals of living a healthy lifestyle – even when it seems like every day is someone's birthday in the office! **E-1**

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