

CREATINE CHEAT SHEET

Dr. Kim Schwabenbauer, RD, CSSD

@fuelyourpassion



Is creatine safe? I heard creatine will make me gain water weight? Can creatine cause hair loss or kidney issues?

Your burning questions answered!

WHAT IS CREATINE?

Creatine allows your muscles to sustain energy by helping to replenish ATP (adenosine tri-phosphate). ATP is the energy currency of your muscle cells. In your muscles, creatine combines with a phosphate (Pi) molecule to create a compound called phosphocreatine (P-Cr). In this new form, it plays an integral role in energy metabolism within your muscle cells. This is especially true for activities that require short bursts of intense energy such as weightlifting and sprinting.

CREATINE'S POTENTIAL BENEFITS

- ✓ **Improved strength and performance:** the ability to lift more weight or do that extra rep that pushes your workouts forward.
- ✓ **Possible cognitive (brain) benefits:** Research suggests it can improve memory, reasoning, and processing speed (something all of us could use a little more of these days!).
- ✓ **Improved strength and performance:** the ability to lift more weight or do that extra rep that pushes your workouts forward.

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IS CREATINE SAFE?

Approximately half of your body's supply of creatine (1 to 2 grams/day) comes from your diet, especially protein-rich foods such as red meat (pork, veal and beef), seafood (fish and shellfish) and animal milk (like cow, goat and sheep milk).

When taken as supplement, for the majority of people, creatine is safe. However, every body is unique, and how much creatine you take and how often you take it depends on many factors. Before you take creatine, talk to a healthcare provider. Caution flags for creatine include taking creatine if you have diabetes, are pregnant, have acute or chronic kidney disease or have liver disease.

WILL CREATINE MAKE ME GAIN WEIGHT?

Creatine pulls water into the cell, so it is possible that you may gain water weight. The good news is this water weight gain may dissipate with extended use. Research suggests that men tend to experience more water retention than women (perhaps due to increased muscle mass) and an average increase of body water is in the range of 3.0- to 4.0 lbs.

WILL CREATINE WORK? HOW MUCH SHOULD I TAKE?

Not everyone is a creatine responder. The only way to know is to give it a try. A dose of 3-5 grams per day is an evidence-based serving size to start.

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WHAT IS THE MOST COMMON TYPE OF CREATINE

The most common (and most researched/tested) type of creatine supplement is creatine monohydrate. Check the ingredients list to ensure this is the first ingredient and other than flavor, there isn't a whole lot else needed on the ingredient list.

Take a quick-digesting source of simple carbohydrates (100% fruit juice, yogurt or a sports drink) with your creatine to increase the absorption rate.

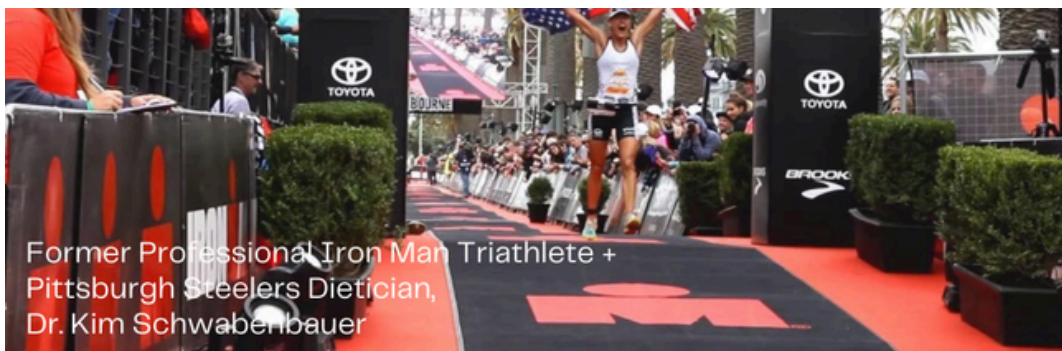
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