

Not all protein powders are created equally

Most athletes and fitness enthusiasts regularly consume some type of protein supplement in order to help repair damaged tissue. Protein powders added to shakes are commonly consumed as a quick, low calorie, healthy way to obtain the required protein after a workout. While there is nothing wrong with this practice, you have to be aware of what you are purchasing because not all protein powders are created equally. In this article, I outline what you should consider when purchasing a protein powder.

Protein powders are relatively expensive, so you want to ensure that you are getting the best quality product you can. Unfortunately many of the brands for sale are loaded with fillers, sugars and artificial sweeteners such as sucralose, aspartame and acesulfame K. If you've read my article on sugar, then you already know the negative impacts of sugar and artificial sweeteners. These unnecessary ingredients aren't what you want to be consuming when you are trying to eat clean and healthy. If you feel you need some sweetness in your protein powder, look for ones sweetened with stevia leaf and contain only natural flavours. Alternatively, go for unflavoured and obtain your sweetness in a more healthful way through whole foods such as fruit rather than refined white sugar or artificial sweeteners.

You also need to consider the quality of the protein used to make the protein powder you are purchasing. Do you know the source of your protein? Does the company have strict manufacturing processes and subject their product to independent third party testing of ingredients? You want to ensure that the protein you ingest does not contain any impurities, meaning it was produced from healthy, grass fed cattle that are free from any growth hormones, antibiotics, pesticides and toxic metals. Grass fed cattle produce a higher quality protein powder that contains higher levels of Conjugated (CLA). CLA is a naturally occurring fatty acid found in organic free range grass fed cattle. CLA is derived from Omega 6 and regulates how the body stores and utilizes fat. It has also been touted as defending against cancer. If your protein powder doesn't indicate that it is sourced from grass fed cattle – then it's not.

Although higher quality protein powders cost more, I feel it's worth it. Especially if you are consuming them on a regular basis. So the next time you go to purchase your protein powder, take a closer look at the ingredient list so you can be sure you are buying a quality product.

