



March 9, 2017 – Grand Rapids, MI

Can Vegetarian Protein Help You Build Muscle?

People often ask me which is the best type of protein to build muscle when weight training. The reason for the question is bodybuilder and weight-training websites that condemn vegetarian protein as not good enough to build muscle. In the same issue of *Medicine and Science in Sport and Exercise* as the paper from Tuesday, a research study examined that question.

Researchers divided 54 men into three groups. One group got a vegetarian protein blend of soy and dairy, a second group got dairy-only protein, while the third received a maltodextrin placebo. They all performed the same weight training program for 12 weeks. The researchers then tested their strength as well as evidence of muscle growth after taking muscle biopsies.

All participants gained strength and muscle. Those who took the protein supplements gained slightly more muscle than the placebo group, but there were no differences in muscle gains between the soy-dairy blend and the whey-protein group.

This contributes to the body of research showing that it's the protein that makes the difference, not whether it's a vegetable or animal source of the protein. Use whichever fits your lifestyle better, but it's doing the lifting that makes the real difference.

What are you prepared to do today?



Dr. Chet

Reference: MSSE. 2017 Feb 13. DOI: 10.1249/MSS.0000000000001224

WGVU FM 88.5/95.3 **npr** **Straight Talk on Health**

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