

## To Protein Powder or to Not Protein Powder

Ever walked into a supplement store, looked at the shelves with all the tubs of protein, all in different shapes, sizes and colours, and walked out thinking, that's way too hard to deal with. Well you are not alone. Many people have no idea of the different products available and where to start when choosing one, or if they even need one... Let's see if I can clear it up a little bit for you.

If you are the average fitness goer on a journey of health and well being, than no, you do not need a protein powder supplement. In saying that, you don't NEED it, but it can be a good addition to a well balanced diet for a number of reasons. If you are a person short for time at any stage during the day, protein smoothie is the perfect solution. If you have just finished exercising and are not due home for another hour, protein shake to start the recovery process is ideal. If you are someone who struggles to meet there daily protein intake through natural food sources, a protein powder addition could really help. So what are all the different proteins and what do they do.

When looking at standard protein powders (not mass gainers or fat burners or BCAAs), you generally get casein or whey. The difference... Casein is a slow releasing protein. Whey is a quick releasing protein designed for rapid absorption. Then you have concentrates or isolates. Concentrates usually consist of 60% protein and 40% fats and carbs. Isolates strip the fat and carbs and consist of 90-95% protein. Then the list goes on to pea proteins, brown rice proteins, hemp proteins, egg protein or mixed plant proteins – all your vegetarian, vegan or lactose free options.

Whey protein isolate is the main protein you want to be looking at. It is generally low in fat, carbs and sugar with a high concentrate of protein. After a workout, whey protein isolate is the best as it provides branched-chain amino acids (BCAAs) for rapid absorption into the blood stream for enhanced muscle recovery. Adding a scoop of protein powder to a breakfast smoothie gives you a good dose of protein in the morning and helps you stay fuller for longer. They also add a sweetness to the smoothie so there is no need to add too much fruit or any honey, maple syrup or any other sweetening agents.

Bottom line, no one needs protein powder in their diet. However they can be a good addition for those strength training, struggling to meet protein intake needs, or those who are time poor. I do not need protein powder, but I always aim to get some protein with every meal and this can definitely help. I love a scoop in my smoothies or added to my oats. Mixed with greek yogurt and fruit is also delicious and protein pancakes are also delicious and a great post workout snack.

If you decide you do want to go down the road of protein powders but you are not sure where to start, just chat to the guys in the supp stores, they know their stuff and will point you in the write direction.