

Amino Acids

Amino acids are the building blocks of protein, some of which the body can make itself and some which need to be consumed in our diet. Some amino acids are responsible for stimulating muscle growth and repair, which is why many sportspeople choose to consume them in sports nutrition products.

You will often see products advertised as having BCAAs or branched-chain amino acids. BCAAs refers to three amino acids, leucine, isoleucine and valine, which have a unique branched-shape structure, and aid in muscle protein synthesis. These are considered essential amino acids, as they need to be consumed through the diet.

Applications

Fortification with amino acids can help achieve desired nutritional profile for products containing protein from alternative sources.

The research into amino acids as sports nutrition is still developing, but it is mainly directed at exploring their potential in:

- Stimulating muscle protein synthesis
- Aiding recovery from intense exercise
- Acting as a fuel source during exercise



Top tips

- Before using sports nutrition products first make sure to include quality food sources of amino acids in your diet like eggs, beans or fish.
- Sports nutrition can only support your training program, not replace it. If a product is making claims which sound too good to be true, they probably are.