SUSTENANCE FOR SIZE

News on nutrition and muscle growth

Weight training makes you stronger and bigger. However, the result you get from training might vary dramatically from the result of your training partner who is doing the exact same training program. The reasons for these variations might relate to both intrinsic factors such as your genetics and extrinsic factors like your diet. While you do not have any control over your genetics, you can control your diet. However, scientists do not clearly understand exactly how diet can affect changes in your muscle size. For example, protein intake is one variable that might affect your training response. Since your muscles are built from protein, it stands to reason that variations in your protein intake might affect your training response. While some studies support greater muscle gains with greater protein intakes,[3] others do not.[1] Other dietary factors, like total calorie intake, might also have an impact. One way to investigate how diet might impact your muscle growth is through something called cluster analysis. Researchers recruit a group of subjects, divide them into clusters based on their muscle mass gains (such as small gains, medium gains, and large gains), and then look at how dietary variables are different between the clusters.

Power Key: diet, weight training, muscle growth, protein

It's not *that* clear how important diet is to gains in the size of your muscles.

Original Research

Thalacker-Mercer, A.E., et al. Does habitual dietary intake influence myofiber hypertrophy in response to resistance training? *Applied Physiology, Nutrition, and Metabolism* 34:632-639, 2009.