

Seniors can still build muscle



by Julie O'Connell Seamer

Seniors can still build muscle when supplemented with the correct nutrients. Intake of essential amino acids can boost their lean body mass, strength and physical function, promising news for those what are at risk of gradual decline in physiological growth and function.

A study reported in the Clinical Nutrition Journal reported that a number of participants with an average age of 67 years were given a daily amino acid supplement between meals for 16 weeks. Nutrients contained within that were histidine, isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, phenylalanine, threonine, valine and arginine. Researchers said “the composition of this mixture of essential amino acids (EAA) was designed to be maximally effective in stimulating muscle protein synthesis in the elderly”.

After 12 weeks an increase in lean body mass was recorded, and strength in legs increased by an average of 22 per cent after 16 weeks. Improvements in measure of walking speed were also reported. Researchers proposed that “over a long period of time, exercise will amplify the beneficial effects”.

The world population is expected to increase to 9.1 billion by 2050 and 21 per cent of people will be over the age of 60 in 2050, compare to 10 per cent in 2000.

reference:

E. Borsheim, Q. U T. Bui, S. Tissier, H. Kobayashi, A.A, Fernando, R.R. Wolfe “Effect of amino acid supplementation on muscle mass, strength and physical function in elderly”, Clinical Nutrition, 4 March 2008.