

Maintaining lean body mass is especially important as we age. Over time, muscle mass declines, which increases the risk of muscle weakness and mobility and balance issues. Combining regular physical activity with a healthy diet and, when necessary, supplementing with certain nutrients may help build and preserve muscle mass.

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**The following are some of the top ingredients recommended on Fullscript for muscular health.**

**Whey protein**

Whey protein powder is an efficiently absorbed source of protein derived from dairy that is popular among individuals seeking to gain or maintain lean body mass. When combined with resistance exercise, whey protein supplementation activates mTOR, a signaling protein involved in muscle synthesis (building). Several studies have found that whey protein supplementation following intense exercise may help improve muscle function and recovery, reduce exercise-induced muscle damage, and increase protein balance in the body.

Additionally, whey protein supplementation may improve muscle mass index, handgrip strength, gait speed, and other biomarkers of sarcopenia, a condition characterized by a significant decline in muscle mass and function that affects approximately 10% of adults over the age of 60.

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**Magnesium**

Magnesium is an essential mineral used in numerous reactions in the body, such as muscle contraction and protein synthesis. Dietary sources of magnesium include pumpkin seeds, almonds, spinach, beans, and legumes.

The list below outlines the established recommended dietary allowance (RDA) for daily intake of magnesium based on age:

* Infants 0-6 months: 30 mg
* Infants 7-12 months: 75 mg
* Children 1-3 years: 80 mg
* Children 4-8 years: 130 mg
* Adolescents 9-13 years: 240 mg
* Adolescents 14-18 years (male): 410 mg
* Adolescents 14-18 years (female): 360 mg
* Adults 19-30 years (male): 400 mg
* Adults 19-30 years (female): 310 mg
* Adults 31+ years (male): 420 mg
* Adults 31+ years (female): 320 mg

Studies indicate that maintaining and consuming adequate levels of magnesium through diet and supplementation can promote healthy muscle function. Magnesium deficiency, although uncommon, can lead to uncomfortable muscle cramps. Studies indicate that magnesium supplementation may provide muscle pain relief and has been shown to reduce the occurrence of nocturnal leg cramps.

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**Curcumin**

Best known for its anti-inflammatory properties, curcumin is a plant chemical derived from the root of the turmeric plant (*Curcuma longa*), a species of the ginger family.

One study found that curcumin reduces muscle damage, minimizes the perception of muscle pain, and increases muscle performance when administered before, during, and up to 72 hours after exercise.

Certain formulations of curcumin have poor bioavailability, meaning that it is poorly absorbed by the body. However, simultaneously consuming the compound piperine from black pepper has been shown to increase the bioavailability of curcumin by 2,000%. Additionally, certain formulations of curcumin, such as BCM-95® and Longvida®, have improved bioavailability.

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**BCAAs**

Branched chain amino acids (BCAAs) are essential amino acids (i.e., leucine, valine, isoleucine) that are used as substrates for protein synthesis and energy production. BCAA intake has been shown to alleviate muscle cramps and soreness and may be especially beneficial when taken before and after exercise. One study indicated that BCAAs reduced breakdown and enhanced muscle-protein synthesis.

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**Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*)**

*Withania somnifera* (commonly known as ashwagandha) is a plant best known for its anti-inflammatory properties. Research has shown that using ashwagandha in combination with a strength training program may increase muscle size and strength, particularly in males. A study of 57 men demonstrated that twice-daily supplementation of ashwagandha for an eight-week period yielded a greater increase in muscle strength and muscle size compared to a placebo.

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