Food and drinks to build muscle mass? [1]

Dear Alice,

Are there any specific foods or drink products that can build muscle mass faster without adding fat weight?

Signed, Slim Fast

Answer

Dear Slim Fast,

The best way to build muscle mass is the good 'ol fashioned way — through hard work and dedication. Add to that a well-balanced, nutritious diet primarily comprised of whole foods and you'll be well on your way to building muscle mass without adding fat.

You may be saying to yourself, "But I keep hearing about muscle powders and supplements that can bulk me up super speedily!" Muscle powders and supplements have been around for years and the ads can be seen everywhere. They are so convincing that it's hard to believe they don't help build muscle any faster — but they don't. Although extra calories are needed whenever you markedly increase your exercise routine, the increase does not need to come only from protein, which is what a lot of the labels on the muscle powders imply. Keep in mind that the RDA for protein is approximately 0.8 g/kg of body weight daily, but most Americans typically eat 1.0-1.25 g/kg of body weight.

Additional calories should actually come from a mixture of lean protein, complex carbohydrates [2], and healthy fats [3]. Good sources of complex carbohydrates would include beans, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, while healthy fats could be avocado, nut butter, or low fat dairy. There is no magic bullet, or, in this case, pill or supplement, that can build muscle mass overnight. Instead, look to food and rigorous training to help you achieve your goal of building muscle mass without adding weight from fat. In time, you will see the results you crave.

Check out other Q&As in the Go Ask Alice! Nutrition & Physical Activity [4] archives for more ideas and tips!

Best of luck building your body from the inside out!

Alice!

Category:
Nutrition & Physical Activity [5]
Related questions

Wants to build muscle mass through weight lifting and a healthy diet
I want more curves
Fitting exercise into a busy schedule
Non-meat proteins
Reduced fat and calorie diets: How low is too low?
Obsessed with building muscle (megarexia)

Published date:
May 01, 1993
Last reviewed on:
Jul 27, 2015

Source URL: http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/food-and-drinks-build-muscle-mass#comment-0

Links