

How to Care for Your Muscles

Caring for Body Muscles with Proper Food and Exercise

Cardiac muscle, skeletal muscle, and smooth muscle classify the three types of muscles in the human body. All humans have muscles; and all humans associate muscles with strength, fitness, and body building. But, what exactly are muscles?

Muscle Makeup

Muscles are body organs composed of bunches of fibers that expand and contract to cause movement. Muscle movements are either voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary muscles work when our bodies send signals to our brains telling our brains to make our muscles move an arm or a leg or a finger, et cetera.

Involuntary muscles work on their own, however, because involuntary muscle activity involves contraction of heart muscles, dilation and contraction of pupils, and contraction of the peristalsis (the organ that maneuvers food through the digestive system).

Exercising Muscles to Keep them Strong

In order to keep muscles shapely and prepared to perform tasks we subject them to, we must feed and exercise them. The degree to which we feed and exercise voluntary muscles such as rectus abdominis (abs), quadriceps femoris (four muscles on front of thigh), and biceps brachii (front upper arm muscle) impacts their size and strength. Before we begin routines to strengthen, tone, or increase their sizes, however, the way we feed, rest, and liquify our muscles should be considered.

Including Protein in the Diet

Consuming protein is a vital step in gaining strong lean muscles. Protein is needed to repair muscles after they've torn during exercise. As strange as it may sound, tearing is actually a normal part of muscle growth.

The Importance of Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are as important in muscle growth as protein because carbohydrates provide energy needed to perform exercises that tear muscle before muscle can re-grow into bigger and stronger states. We cannot gain muscle simply by eating protein. We must encourage our muscles to utilize the protein.

Eating foods that help you gain muscle is as important for anyone on a weight loss program as it is for those seeking to bulk up. Strong healthy muscles keeps body metabolism moving at faster rates which in turn allows dieters to lose weight more quickly; and as far as carbohydrates go for those seeking to lose weight, feeding your body carbs so that your muscles can get a good work out in turn allows your body to utilize muscle building protein. So eating carbs to keep energy levels high and to help in maintaining focus helps you perform better during workouts.

Healthy carbs and protein that help you gain muscle include:

Carbohydrates – whole wheat bread, whole-ground pasta, brown rice, old-fashioned and steel-cut oats.

Protein – lean beef, fish, poultry, pork chops, eggs, dairy, legumes, seeds, and nuts.

Eat Muscle Building Foods Aplenty

Foods that help you gain muscle must be consumed in excess if you want your muscles to grow. This means eating more protein and more carbohydrates than usual. This does not mean, however, eating lots of junk food to reach your carb

threshold. Nor does it mean eating fatty meats. It's better to eat healthy carbs and trim excess fat from meat protein sources.

Balance your Diet

Also, eating foods to gain muscle is no excuse for failing to eat balanced diets. If you eat more proteins and more carbohydrates, you must balance these foods with more fruits, vegetables, and grains from good food sources not junk. Moreover, vegetarians seeking to gain muscle should increase their protein, iron, calcium, vitamin D and vitamin B12 intakes.

Drink Plenty of Water

One last thing, water, although a liquid that doesn't look like much, and may leave a lot to be desired in the appetite department, should also be considered as a food your body needs plenty of. Water is vital for growth and maintenance of the human body because it is needed for several biological processes. In addition to two hydrogen and one oxygen, water contains fluoride; and water contains trace elements like sodium, potassium, and chloride which aid metabolism to keep body systems moving and capable of growing muscle.

The bottom line is foods that help you gain and keep muscle must consist of well balanced high energy meals containing lots of protein, plenty of carbohydrates, a sufficient amount of fruits, vegetables, and grain to balance the excess protein and carbohydrate intake, plus plenty of plain, yet refreshing, clear water.