



Is there a place for Creatine Supplementation in the Sport of Rowing?

Probably **not** for the majority but there may be a very small number of rowers who might gain benefit.

What is Creatine?

Creatine is found naturally in our diet – in meat and fish. It is also made by the body and stored in skeletal muscle. The average 70kg body has a store of about 120g of Creatine, with a daily turnover of 2g.

What does it do?

Creatine provides energy for short bursts of high intensity exercise lasting up to 10seconds. This is obviously of little relevance in competitive rowing as the minimum exertion is certainly longer than 10 seconds!

Creatine has also been shown to help increase muscular power and strength development following a resistance training programme and it is this aspect which might be relevant to some individuals in rowing during winter training.

Should I use Creatine?

Creatine supplementation should only be considered if your training programme and diet are optimal and you are of inappropriate lean body mass. Even then you might not respond to Creatine supplementation, and its use should be monitored by a sports medic or sports scientist. There can be no guarantees that there are no side effects from taking Creatine but analysis of current literature suggests there are none.

Where can I get Creatine from?

Creatine supplementation is freely available but not all sources are laboratory tested for purity from contaminants. Unfortunately a source of Creatine that is not tested for its purity may result in a positive drug test, for which the penalties are severe.

Before using any supplement you are advised to make certain that it is not contaminated and if necessary have obtained evidence of testing from your supplier.

Dr Ann Redgrave
GB Rowing Consultant

Mark Edgar
Head of GB Rowing Medical Service

May 2007