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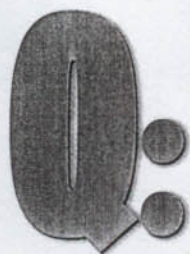


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Safe Supplements

MUSCLE MORSELS

■ Take creatine before and after training. Having a total of five grams split between two doses will help maximize your creatine-supported muscle gains.



Q: *With some supplements being banned due to safety reasons, how can I know that what I am taking is safe and effective?*

A: Supplement legislation has become a complex issue, and FLEX offers the following points to help you determine what's appropriate for your bodybuilding needs.

■ One of the biggest risks is not following supplement-label recommendations. You should follow all dosage recommendations and pay attention to all health warnings.

Often, seemingly healthy athletes are unaware that they fall into a high-risk category. Athletes, and bodybuilders in particular, should have thorough and frequent medical checkups to ensure that they are healthy and that their supplementation is appropriate.

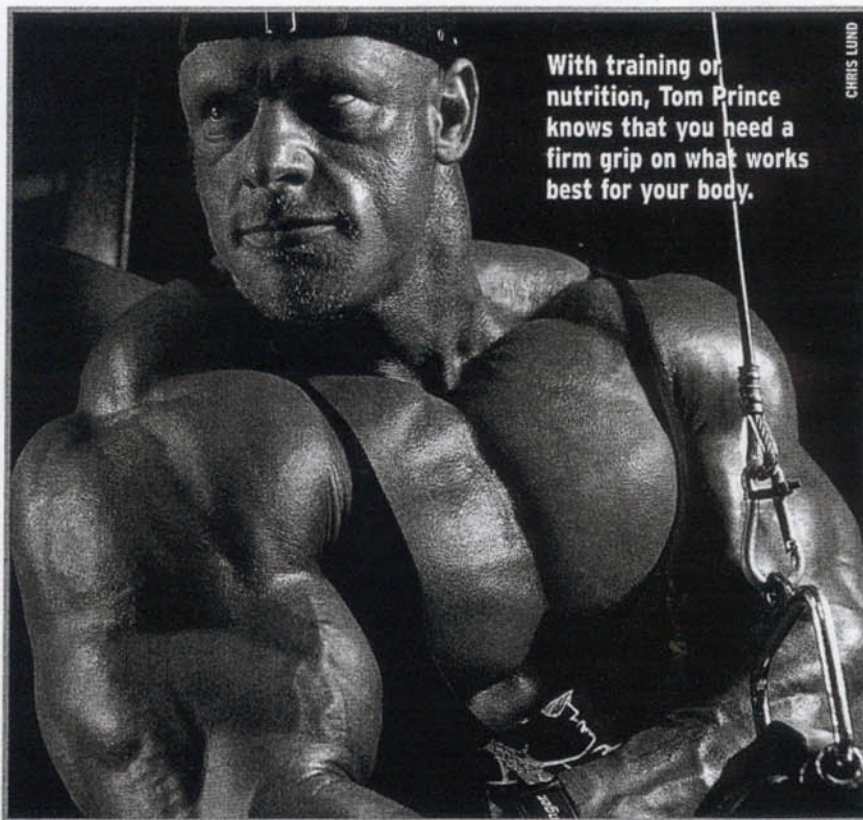
■ Do your research. Not every product works for everybody. Yet, many supplement companies invest thousands — even millions — of dollars to make certain their products work. Christopher Baker, CEO of Global Clinicals, Inc., told FLEX, "At Global Clinicals, Inc., we are hired by supplement companies to independently research supplements. We determine if a supplement works and how effective it is, and [then we] report back to the company."

Companies have a vested interest in selling effective products, Baker says. "If a product doesn't work, consumers aren't going to buy more product. Successful supplement companies are the ones who satisfy their customers, creating repeat business."

■ Start slowly. You don't have to take the maximal dosage from the outset.

FLEX recommends stepping up supplementation. For many products, you can start with a half dosage, then step up to the full amount after

stagger this break from one product to another so you're still supplementing consistently. Since a body often responds well to spikes in



With training and nutrition, Tom Prince knows that you need a firm grip on what works best for your body.

CHRIS LUND

a couple of weeks or a month. This has the advantage of giving your body two "spikes," and a body usually responds better with this two-tier approach than it does when starting with a maximal dosage. Plus, it stretches your supplement dollar.

■ Give your body a break. Every few months, cycle off your supplements for two weeks to a month. You can

supplementation, the best strategy is to go off temporarily so that when you resume, your body perceives this as a spike. This tactic will also help you avoid exceeding the recommended dosage. Supplements you can take all the time include most vitamins and minerals, protein powders and creatine.

— Steve Stiefel **FLEX**

Send your questions on any topic of nutrition to Advanced Nutrition, FLEX magazine, 21100 Erwin St., Woodland Hills CA 91367. For more information on nutrition and supplements, visit www.flexonline.com.