



Why creatine works and how Glanbia is leading the way



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Dr Crionna Tobin provides guidance on sports and active nutrition to athletes, internal teams and brand partners in her role as Head of Science and Education at Glanbia. Her deep expertise is backed by a PhD in performance nutrition and exercise physiology. With so much interest in creatine supplements, she looks at what creatine is and who can benefit.

Crionna – you’re passionate about educating people on the role nutrition plays in maximising performance. What benefits can active people get from creatine supplements?

“Athletes use creatine as a training tool to fuel high-intensity bursts of exercise – think sprinting, lifting or power-based sports. Creatine supports you to train harder, do more reps and, through that, build more muscle for strength, power and endurance. It’s a well-researched, effective supplement for better performance outcomes.”

What is creatine, and how does it work?

“It’s a compound made from amino acids, which the body makes naturally and can be found in meat, chicken & fish. It can be used as an energy source as it regenerates the energy currency of the cell – known as adenosine triphosphate or ATP – and, essentially, once you have more creatine in the muscle, you’ve more ATP or energy available to fuel the muscle.”

Do you have to be an athlete or bodybuilder to get value from a creatine supplement?

“Absolutely not. It helps anyone who’s active, whatever your performance level and regardless of whether you’re male or female. If you’re doing, say, a CrossFit or a Reformer Pilates class, creatine will give you the extra energy you need for those short-term, intense intervals so you get more out of your session. It’s particularly useful in sports that require power, changes of pace or finish kicks.”

Can you train harder immediately you start taking it?

“Creatine only works if you saturate the muscle. To do that, you take three to five grams of creatine every day for 20–28 days. Once you’ve taken it consistently – and that’s the big caveat with creatine, you have to take it consistently – the muscles can recycle energy faster to take you through those bursts of activity.”

Why do older people benefit from taking creatine?

“There’s some really nice research (1) showing that when people over the age of 65 combine creatine with resistance training, they can slow the rate of muscle loss that happens naturally as we age. There’s also emerging evidence which suggests that creatine may support cognitive health in ageing adults – hopefully there’ll be more research on this soon.”

So, you’re taking the creatine, you’re training. Do you need protein too?

“They’re a really good duo. Creatine will provide your muscles with fast-acting energy so you can lift heavier or you can cycle up that hill a little bit faster. Afterwards, eating protein is a great way to provide your muscle with the building blocks to repair and grow, while also helping you [hit your daily protein intake](#).”

What’s your favourite way to take creatine?

“We’ve just launched three [Optimum Nutrition Micronised Creatine Powder](#) flavours in the UK and Europe – Blue Raspberry, Fruit Punch and a citrusy Orange. Blue Raspberry is my favourite at the moment. I’ve been throwing some ice in and it’s been cooling me down. There’s an unflavoured version, too, which is great for mixing into shakes, juice – you name it.”

What if you don’t take a shaker bottle around with you?

“Our creatine capsules are a convenient alternative; just take them with water, no mixing needed. We are exploring different ways of bringing creatine to consumers. Our Optimum Nutrition Micronised Creatine Capsules won best creatine supplement at the Women’s Health Fitness Awards this year. The innovation pipeline’s always buzzing.”

Why is it important to use a good-quality brand?

“Not all supplements are created equally and it makes sense to choose brands that prioritise quality. Optimum Nutrition’s creatine is tested for purity, meets strict EU and global standards, and is trusted by athletes worldwide. We’re the #1 creatine brand in the US and UK (2).”

How’s Glanbia breaking new ground in the way it communicates about creatine?

“One of the main barriers to using creatine is that consumers think: ‘It’s complicated.’ But it’s really not. So, we aim to demystify it, from having clear on-pack messaging, to creating the videos below, along with using global researchers in this space, like Dr. Eric Helms to help breakdown barriers around creatine.

Creatine is one of the most studied supplements in the world, with over 500 peer-reviewed studies showing it’s safe in healthy adults at recommended doses, even with long-term use.

If you’re a healthy, active adult taking the recommended dose, it’s a safe, proven way to support your athletic performance, training intensity, quality of life as you age and more.”

References

(1) The power of creatine plus resistance training for healthy aging: enhancing physical vitality and cognitive function 2024 [Available from National Library of Medicine – [link](#)]

(2) Circana All Outlets, Creatine Powders Category, Value Sales, 52 weeks 19/01/2025

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