

Please Take One!



SUPPLEMENT OF THE MONTH: L-Arginine

What is L-arginine and where is it found?

L-arginine is an amino acid; amino acids are the chemical building blocks of protein. L-arginine is obtained from the diet through red meat, poultry, fish, and dairy products. It can also be made in a laboratory and used as medicine. L-arginine is used for heart and blood vessel conditions because it is converted into nitric oxide inside the body, which dilates the blood vessels and causes increased blood flow. Additionally, L-arginine stimulates the release of growth hormone and insulin. It also triggers the body to make protein and is associated with wound healing.

What are the benefits?

L-arginine is used to treat congestive heart failure (CHF), chest pain, high blood pressure, and coronary artery disease. It is also taken to improve dementia, erectile dysfunction and male infertility. Some people use L-arginine for preventing the common cold, improving kidney function after a kidney transplant, high blood pressure during pregnancy (pre-eclampsia), improving athletic performance, boosting the immune system, and preventing inflammation of the digestive tract in premature infants. It is also used topically for wound healing and to increase blood flow to the hands and feet.

Additionally, L-arginine can be combined with a number of over-the-counter and prescription medications to treat various conditions. For instance, L-arginine is used along with ibuprofen for migraine headaches. It is also used with conventional chemotherapy drugs to treat breast cancer; with other amino acids for treating weight loss in people with AIDS; and with fish oil and other supplements for reducing infections, improving wound healing, and shortening recovery time after surgery.

Are there interactions with food, medications or herbal supplement?

L-arginine should not be taken with nitrates or anti-hypertensive drugs. Consult a doctor before taking arginine if you are on Viagra. Avoid xylitol, a sugar alcohol when taking arginine.

Are there side effects?

L-arginine can cause some side effects such as abdominal pain, bloating, diarrhea, gout, blood abnormalities, allergies, airway inflammation, worsening of asthma, and low blood pressure.

Consult a doctor before taking L-arginine if you have allergies, asthma, low blood pressure, or have had a recent heart attack. Stop taking L-arginine 2 weeks before any type of surgery.