

BCAA delay fatigue and Boost performance

The branched chain amino acids (BCAA) (leucine, isoleucine and valine) play a pivotal role in muscle metabolism during exercise. These amino acids are essential for the activation of protein synthesis in muscle after exercise. This is a key aspect of recovery, repair and growth.

One recent study has shown that supplementation with leucine was able to increase power output and time to exhaustion in a group of rowers. Although the researchers examined several aspects of central nervous system fatigue (such as changes in plasma ratio of free-tryptophan to BCAA), they attributed the power and performance benefits from BCAA to a reduction in muscle damage and the preservation of muscle fuel (glycogen).

Whether the beneficial effects of the BCAA resides in their ability to reduce central nervous system fatigue, muscle damage or spare valuable muscle fuel, it's clear that supplementation with BCAA has the capacity to boost performance particularly during strenuous exercise.

Source: *European Journal of Applied Physiology*, 97; 664-672, 2007.