

Nutrition Forum

By Donna Tinnerello, MS, RD, CDN

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Nutrition Forum is a place for both clinicians and HIV-positive people to ask questions about the nutritional care of people living with HIV. Columns highlight the ever-popular Virtual Faculty at Jennifer's Place <<http://www.jenniferjensen.com>>.

Question: Immunocal IMMUNOCAL.... Any info on this product? Only ingredient listed on box is Milk Protein Isolate. I have friends who say it works on re-building the immune system of HIV patients. At their web site www.immunocal.com I could only find out that the product includes L-Glutamine, Whey and Cysteine. It cost \$99.00 for a month supply and I'm skeptical.

Answer: Chester Myers, PhD, noted: Whey proteins provide exceptional nutritional quality within the protein category of food components. The sulfur-

containing amino acids, an important part of proteins and often somewhat low in many proteins, are particularly rich in whey protein. It is believed that this is a main source of observed improvements in various monitors used to reflect the health of the immune system and muscle mass with use of whey protein.

There are a number of whey products that provide excellent protein. The technology available for isolation, drying and other processing of these products has been under scrutiny, particularly with respect to maintenance of the sulfur-containing amino acids in their 'native' form. When oxidized, these amino acids can become unavailable for the normal body chemistries. Therefore, it is important to minimize oxidation during preparation of whey protein products. I am not aware that there are any clinical trials that have indicated any one product is definitively superior to the others. Some studies have compared whey proteins with non-whey proteins, but this doesn't provide us with information that would justify choosing one particular whey product over other whey products.

DAAIR (Direct AIDS Access Information Resources) also offers whey protein products.

Sharon Ann Meyer, AS, AA, DTR from HIV ReSources responds:

Whey protein is one of many popular dietary supplements tried by people living with

HIV. The National HIV Nutrition Guidelines Working Group is currently investigating the research behind whey protein and a number of other so-called functional foods. We will focus on the working group's findings in future newsletter issues.

Question: Whey Protein And Dairy Sensitivity

Hi! If someone has a dairy sensitivity or allergy, will they have trouble with whey protein?

Answer: Donna Tinnerello, MS, RD, CDN responds:

Yes, because dairy allergies can mean any component. See Charlie's response below for more information.

Charlie Smigelski, MS, RD notes: People can have dairy allergies to various parts of milk proteins, lactalbumins, caseinates, etc. I am figuring this is not about lactose issues, and you can get designer whey proteins that are lactose free. I have had very few people be sensitive to Designer Whey. For persons with galactose issues, I would not visit whey protein in any form. If you are concerned, you might have the person pre-treat their gut with a 15-day course of Culturelle/Lactobacillus GG. Read the J Allergy Clin Immunol article by Majama and Isolauri, "Probiotics: a novel approach in the management of food allergy", 1997 Feb; 99(2): 179-85. There is also an article: "Probiotic bacteria down-regulate the milk-induced inflammatory response in milk-hypersensitive subjects but have an immunostimulatory effect in healthy subjects" in Clin Exp Allergy 1998 Dec; 28(12): 1474-9.