Friday Favorites: Comparing Vegetarian and Vegan Athletic Performance, Endurance, and Strength Transcript

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Plant-Based Diets and Athletic Performance

Limits of Short-Term Diet Studies

Recreational Runners and Early Evidence

all right [Music] few Studies have investigated the impact of a plant-based diet on athletic performance but the majority of the studies that have been done show no differences in endurance performance or strength so while plant-based diets do not seem to provide advantages or disadvantages on exercise performance what plant-based diets can do is reduce the risk of chronic disease a point I made in my video why all athletes should eat plant-based diets because surprisingly endurance athletes may have more advanced atherosclerosis and more heart muscle damage compared with sedentary individuals so it's even more important they eat healthy but due to the favorable impact on health it could be assumed that performance would also be influenced by plant-based diets uh let's take a closer look at the available evidence this is the most commonly cited review studies connecting vegetarian diets to improved Health are well established however the evidence for this phenomenon to be transferred to improve physical performance in athletes is less clear finding no difference at least acutely shouldn't a vegetarian-based diet in an omnivorous diet in muscular power muscular strength short burst or endurance performance the intervention studies in this review however only lasted days or weeks so being a vegetarian for four days may not tip the balance or even a few months but see that's a considerable limitation these are people who had been eating meats you know their whole lives and subsequently adopt a vegetarian diet only for the duration of the study rather than comparing participants who have adhered to a vegetarian or meat containing diet long term this study compared Exercise capacity of vegan vegetarian and meat eating recreational Runners and found similar maximum power output among all three groups suggesting there's no significant difference in maximum Exercise capacity though that's at the same training frequency time and distance perhaps plant-based diets might enhance recovery and allow such athletes to train longer and harder a number of Studies have come out since this review was published in 2016.

Endurance Athletes Show Higher VO2 Max

Vegan Athletes and Endurance Advantage

what's the update well this study compared the cardiorespiratory Fitness and Peak torque strength differences between vegetarian and omnivore endurance athletes most of the vegetarians were actually vegans at most for at least two years and results from the study indicate that vegetarian endurance athletes cardio respiratory Fitness was greater than that for their omnivorous counterparts the greater VO2 max meaning a greater maximal oxygen uptake a greater aerobic capacity as measured on a progressive graded maximal treadmill test to exhaustion though Peak torque Peak strength based on leg extensions didn't differ between Diet groups bottom line these days suggest that vegetarian diets do not compromise performance outcomes and may facilitate aerobic capacity in athletes in this 2020 study all the plant-based participants were eating vegan for an average of four years so they were essentially comparing those who ate me for 21 years versus those who ate me for 25 years but after four years eating plants you might expect to see some sort of difference yet no significant differences were noted for upper and lower body muscle strength like in the last new study both groups of athletes were comparable for total body weight lean body mass so age was significantly higher in vegans compared with enforce so that put them at a little disadvantage yet still there it is again significantly better aerobic capacity then they had them peddled until exhaustion and the vegan group lasted about 25 percent longer 12 minutes as opposed to nine minutes is that just because their aerobic capacity is so high no even after controlling for VO2 max levels there was still a significant endurance advantage in the vegans the researchers conclude that in the very released a strictly plant-based diet doesn't seem to be detrimental to endurance and muscle strength and endurance might actually be better in vegans contrary to popular belief [Music]