Real Health Podcast
Brought to you by the Riordan Clinic

Episode#60: Importance of Amino Acids

Intro: The information contained on the Real Health Podcast and the resources mentioned are for educational purposes only. They're not intended as and shall not be understood or construed as medical or health advice. The information contained on this podcast is not a substitute for medical or health advice from a professional who is aware of the facts and circumstances of your individual situation. Information provided by hosts and guests on the Real Health Podcast or the use of any products or services mentioned does not create a practitioner patient relationship between you and any persons affiliated with this podcast.

This is the Real Health Podcast brought to you by Riordan Clinic. Our mission is to bring you the latest information and top experts in functional and integrative medicine to help you make informed decisions on your path to real health.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Welcome everyone to another episode of the Real Health Podcast, and I'm your host, Dr. Ron Hunninghake. I'm the Chief Medical Officer here at Riordan, and it's our wonderful opportunity to have on the show today Dr. David Minkoff. David is the head of the LifeWorks Wellness Center down in Florida. So David, welcome to our show.

Dr. David Minkoff: Thanks, Ron. Good to be here and good to see you again.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Yeah. See, we sat next to one another at a banquet after one of Dr. Frank Shallenberger's meetings, and it was a great to get to know you. I admire the fact that you are such an incredible Ironman racer. How many have you done now?

Dr. David Minkoff: I've done 43 full Ironman triathlons and a couple hundred of various other distances, and I'm training now heavily for an upcoming one in June.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Yeah. So when you did your lecture at Dr. Shallenberger's conference, that was the thing that caught my attention is that it's an incredible grueling experience, and so it must beat up your body. And I thought, how does this guy survive? Then you mentioned about this amazing new amino acid combo and how you were able to use it to do repair work in your own body. Maybe we could start there. What is this and how does it help people repair their body?

Dr. David Minkoff: Sure. One of the challenges of modern life is that most people don't have an intestine that really works like it's supposed to. It's inundated with glyphosate and colorants and-

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Plastics.

Dr. David Minkoff: Chemicals and pesticides and drugs, like even aspirin or Tylenol.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Ibuprofen.

Dr. David Minkoff: Ibuprofen. These drugs cause gut injury. When you get an injured gut, then the gut doesn't do what it's supposed to. It's supposed to be able to take food in more or less a liquid form because you chew it, and it's supposed to be able to break the food down into minute-size particles so that it can be absorbed. And then your body cells can get that stuff, and it can repair the body, grow the body, whatever it's supposed to be doing. Probably 20 to 30% of the population is on drugs that block stomach acid. They're now over the counter. So if you are on those drugs, you can't absorb minerals and you can't digest proteins. So you're sort of out of luck there. Then people are taking medications and they just don't digest their food. So deficiency is a major, major problem with people's health because if you're deficient, then your bones go, your enzymes go, your muscles go, your brain goes. That's a serious problem.

If you look at any of the categories of chronic illness that we see now, which is at a sort of a boom rate, obesity, diabetes, osteoporosis, cancer, autoimmune disease, that 100% of these people are deficient in sometimes things very simple, just vitamin D. I mean, we live in Florida, and if the patient comes in and they're not supplementing with vitamin D, they're deficient.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Same here. Same here.

Dr. David Minkoff: And we found with Covid that 84% of the people who died with Covid had a vitamin D level below 30. I want their vitamin D level to be like 70, 80 or 90. So this is a major thing. One of the big deficiencies that people have is amino acids. Amino acids are building blocks for proteins. So proteins are big complex molecules, and there's an alphabet, you could look at it if you're thinking of Scrabble. So you get dealt certain tiles with certain letters and you can only make words out of the letters that you've got. In English language there's 26 letters, and there's probably a million words in the English language. So you can make lots of stuff. In the protein alphabet, there are these things called amino acids, and there's 22 letters. So there's 22 amino acids, and out of those 22 amino acids, your body can make proteins. Now hair is protein and skin is protein and liver cells are protein and immune cells and enzymes are protein and bone is protein. This is the basic building block of our body.

So if you eat some steak, let's say you have a piece of steak, and that steak is made up of fibers of protein, and those fibers are made up of smaller units called amino acids. Now one protein fiber has 5,400 amino acids per fiber.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Wow.

Dr. David Minkoff: Now you can't absorb the fiber. If you chew the fiber up real fine or if you chew the steak up real fine, you get a single fiber. But the single fiber has to be acted on by enzymes in your stomach and in your intestine to chop that one fiber into 5,400 single amino acids, which then can gain entrance to go through your intestine and get into your body. If you can't digest it, your body can't absorb the fiber, it can't use it. So with the challenge of not having stomach acid and not having enough enzymes, 95% of the people that we see, and we test them for levels of amino acids in their blood, so it's a fasting blood test. How are the levels of the 22 amino acids in your blood? And 95% of the people we see have deficiencies. They're low. They're not getting in there. And what's interesting-

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: And I was going to say you need amino acids to make enzymes. Enzymes are made from amino acids. So if you can't break down the amino acids, you can't get the amino acids to make the enzymes, which means you can't break ... So it's like a circle. You're caught in a horrible loop.

Dr. David Minkoff: It's a catch 22. It's a terrible catch 22. And you see this all the time. You see a person has a thyroid hormone deficiency, but then you look on their amino acids and the amino acid that you make thyroid hormone out of is called tyrosine and their tyrosine level in their blood is really low. Then you look at their iodine level and it's really low. So if you don't have iodine, you don't have tyrosine, you can't make thyroid hormone. If you can't make collagen, you can't make bone, you can't make connective tissue. If you can't make muscle, you can't make hearts and biceps. If you don't have enough of any of them, you don't have enzymes. And without enzymes, you can't digest and break down the food. You can't make neurotransmitters.

Virtually all the people who have depression, anxiety, all this sort of stuff, they have deficiencies of the proteins in their brain, these neurotransmitters. Most of them are based on amino acids that are made out of GABA and tryptophan and dopamine, tyrosine, and phenylalanine. These are amino acids and they don't have them, so they can't make them. So probably 50% of what's called mental problems, illness, depression, anxiety, it's physical. It's nutritional deficiency.

We have a guy who buys this. The product that we make is called Perfect Amino, and it's the exact right balance of amino acids so that you don't need enzymes to digest them. They come through your stomach, right into your bloodstream in 23 minutes. They're in your bloodstream. And then when your body gets this load of these amino acids, it can make whatever it needs. And if you're having trouble building muscle, it builds muscle. If you're having trouble with neurotransmitters, it makes neurotransmitters. So you can restore the body.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: I've had patients say, "Yeah, but Doctor, I'm already taking a protein powder, and plus I eat a lot of high protein foods. So I wouldn't need this, would I?" What's different about this that makes it stand out in terms of how patients can actually get what they need? How does this work?

Dr. David Minkoff: Well, if you had a body that was really working and you had enzymes and you had stomach acid and you couldn't digest it, and your gut wall wasn't overgrown with parasites and yeasts and other stuff, bad bacteria. Well, if his system worked maybe 50, 100 years ago, people ate real food. There was grown with real minerals, and they weren't injected with antibiotics and hormones and all this other stuff. Well, your bodies could do okay, but nowadays that's hard to do. So when we measure the levels of people who say, "I'm eating enough protein, I should be okay." But they're not actually okay.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: They're not okay.

Dr. David Minkoff: Their levels are low. And this is sort of a bypass where you can say, "Okay, fine, have three protein meals a day. You should. But supplement with Perfect Amino because this will get in. It doesn't need to be digested, it doesn't meet enzymes, and it replenishes you. And it works very fast." And people, they're actually amazed. They're like, "I used to have to go to my hairdresser every six weeks and now I got to g o..." And they would complain to me, they would say, "Now I've got to go every four weeks. It's costing me more money. My hair's growing, and my nails are growing, and my vision got better, and my energy got better." Because all these functions. If you have osteoporosis and you want to regrow your bone, calcium won't regrow your bone. Half your bone is collagen. It's protein. And if you put the protein there, then you can make the bone and then you can regrow your body.

I mean, we have thousands of testimonials, and I've worked with some very high-end athletes. Tour de France athletes, professional baseball players and football players, and they come in and they're very high performance people. Their bodies are way beyond anything normal, but they want to get better. And when you measure their amino acids, they have low ones too. And then you add Perfect Amino to what they're taking and they call you back and they say, "Holy smokes. I can feel it. This is really working. I recover faster. My soreness doesn't last very long." So it's pretty much across the board in today's society, an essential nutrient that people have to take. They have to take amino acids.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Yeah. Now, isn't the gut lining just one cell thick? And that if that cell is not functioning properly, your digestion is thrown off.

Dr. David Minkoff: And the other thing is that that layer gets traumatized and it's supposed to replace itself every three or four days. There's a whole concept called protein turnover. The old stuff wears out and then the new stuff replaces it. You get a wound. That skin should be growing, that thing should be healing in there relatively quickly. But if you are low in protein, low in amino acids, then the body's like, "I can't make it that fast." So the gut should replace every three or four days that inner lining of cells, but it might not be replaced for every 8 or 10 days because it just doesn't have the raw materials there to be able to do it.

Then what happens is that you have damage. That inner lining layer is damaged. The joints between those cells are weak and broken down. That's where leaky gut is. And then you get all this stuff coming across into your blood. I don't know if you guys look at blood under a darkfield microscope, but you look under blood under darkfield microscope, you see worms and stuff running around these people's blood. Where'd it get there? Came through their gut. And that just means that they're not healing. They're not maintaining their body.

Advertisement: There's a lot more to this conversation, and it's coming up right after a quick break.

Today's podcast is brought to you by LivOn Labs, makers of liposomal vitamins and supplements. LivOn uses a liposomal encapsulation technology to protect nutrients from destruction in the digestive system. This allows for more efficient delivery of essential vitamins and nutrients. Choose from various supplements that support health and wellbeing such as lithospheric vitamin C, magnesium, glutathione, and more. To learn more visit LivOnLabs.com.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: What is it about the ratio of the eight essential amino acids that makes this unique? Because I know a lot of people say, "Well, I take amino acids, I take these protein powders and whatnot." My understanding from when I first heard you speak is that, wasn't this developed in Italy where they were able to do some research to assess what the ratios were of the amino acids so that all of the amino acids would be used perfectly? And that's where the name comes from. Is that right?

Dr. David Minkoff: That's right. They did experiments to try to say ... So the difference between a protein and a fat and a carbohydrate is that proteins have an added mineral called nitrogen. Fats and carbohydrates don't have nitrogen. Amino acids, proteins have nitrogen. Amino in Greek means nitrogen. So these are nitrogen containing molecules. If you took a scoop of whey protein, you can measure, and let's say you took only whey protein for the whole day as your sole protein source. You didn't eat any meat, fish or eggs. You didn't have any pea protein, you didn't have anything. You just ate fruits and vegetables and whey protein. And you took, let's say four big scoops of whey protein every day, and that was your protein requirement.

In that 100 grams of whey protein, there would be 16 grams of nitrogen. So you could say, "I'm putting in 16 grams of nitrogen in the body." Now if the body's able to utilize it, which means it breaks down the whey protein into individual amino acids, those amino acids are absorbed through the gut. They go to the cells. The amino acids that get made into protein stay in the body. The nitrogen that isn't made into protein gets peed out. So if you can do a balanced study on somebody, you say, "Okay, I'm going to take 100 grams of whey protein. How much comes out?" Turns out 84% of it comes out. I can't use it. Not quite the right form. It's not the right balance. Eggs like whole chicken eggs, 52% of the nitrogen comes out.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: That's considered the best food as far as-

Dr. David Minkoff: That's the best food. Other than breast milk, it's the best.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Yeah, yeah.

Dr. David Minkoff: But you look at things like soy, 16 or 17%. The proteins made out of rice and pea are very low. They're under 10%. Which means that 90% of the amino acids of the protein, you're not getting. Your body can't do it. And Perfect Amino, 99% of the nitrogen that comes in. So it's a special balance of eight of these amino acids that are called essential. We have to get those. And if we have those eight, we could make the other 14. So if you take that in and you measure how much came out, less than 1% of the nitrogen comes out, the body takes this stuff and it utilizes it. That's why it's so powerful because you can rebuild the body. The body could use this to rebuild itself. So then you have improvements, and it helps.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: What about, we have a number of vegans that we care for and they are concerned about where the protein comes from. So can you talk a little bit about Perfect Amino, its source, and how it's put together like that?

Dr. David Minkoff: Yeah. So you can train bacteria to make amino acids.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Really?

Dr. David Minkoff: Yeah. They're little factories. So this is a vegan product. It's a vegan safe product. There's no animals used in the product. You can also extract these amino acids from beans and peas, but they're going to be synthesized. The best manufacturers of amino acids in the world are the Japanese, and they have labs that can manufacture pharmaceutical grade. So these are pure. They're 99% pure amino acids. There's nothing in there. There's no fillers, there's no additives, there's no chemicals, there's no pesticides, there's no anything. This is really completely clean. And then amino acids come in two forms. There's a left-sided version and a right-sided version. Most amino acid products that people take have a mixture, so it's 50% left, 50% right.

The body can't use the right-handed version. So they automatically are wasted. Perfect Amino is 100% left form pharmaceutical grade amino acid. So it's pure. There's nothing in there. This goes in your body and, like I said earlier, in 23 minutes, it's in your bloodstream. We've done studies on this. You can measure the bloodstream increase right away, it doesn't stimulate insulin. It doesn't stimulate a blood glucose response. So if people are trying to do keto or they're trying to be low carb, or they're diabetics and they want to wash their sugar, if you take whey protein, you will get a sugar problem because it's

insulinogenic, it kicks it up. But Perfect Amino doesn't do any of it. So it can replenish you, but it doesn't affect your overall metabolism in a bad way.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: I also like the idea that people can start out the morning with this. As a matter of fact, isn't that probably the best time to take it because your stomach is empty and you don't really need other foods? As a matter of fact, you probably don't want other foods with this. You want to keep that ratio perfect.

Dr. David Minkoff: Ideally you do. We have people mix it, which is okay, but see, you're coming off of fast. And most people don't eat during the night. So they come off a 10, 12, 14 hour fast. Their body is in metabolism. It's in a breakdown state. The body is using its own self for fuel during that process. What happens when you take Perfect Amino, it kicks you into an anabolic state. It's like the body's like, "Okay, we've done a clean out during the night, but now we're ready to build and we're ready to repair things." And then if you exercise in the morning, you'll find you'll lift heavier, you'll run faster. If you take Perfect Amino before your workout, you'll feel the difference. You can tell.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: How long have you been working with it clinically now? Because I think I first heard you talk about it maybe eight or nine years ago. Is that about what it is or has it been longer than that?

Dr. David Minkoff: It's been longer. I was able to help develop this because I got injured and I was a vegetarian and I couldn't heal. I tried everything. I mean, I tried everything. I couldn't heal. Then I was playing with mixtures of amino acids, and I had some friends who were from Italy, and they came up with this thing. My hamstring, six weeks it healed. And I'd been working on it for a year. I mean, I chiropractored and injected it and peptided it. I did everything. Acupuncture. Just wouldn't stably heal. I would go to the track. I would try to run. I could feel it. This baby's going to pull if I do it and I just can't do it.

Then I did Perfect Amino. In six weeks, the muscle was completely healed. And I actually had my best Ironman about two months later and had my best performance ever. And I'd been a vegetarian. The other thing that was remarkable to me, and at first it concerned me, but I'd always weighed like 154 pounds and have a low body fat. When I started taking Perfect Amino, my physical measurements did not change, but I gained about eight pounds in lean body mass.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Wow.

Dr. David Minkoff: What happened was is I had been deficient in amino acids being a vegetarian, and my bones filled in and my organs filled in and my heart performance went up. My maximum heart rate went up 12 points from what I'd ever been able to do before because the body now had filled in all this backlog of I've been deficient for many years in amino acids. And now that I was filling it in, the body was like, "Okay, let's put the genetic blueprint back to normal." And that's what happened. A lot of people don't even know that or realize it, and it's not something that we easily measure. But my waist didn't change size and my chest size didn't change and my biceps didn't change. I didn't put muscle in those areas. But what I did was everything else on the inside got filled in and my performance got better.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: I don't think people really know how much of the protein they're eating actually gets wasted or turns into carbohydrate, basically, and they end up putting on fat, but they don't really

put on muscle. The main idea is that we need ... Well, I think people need more muscle, but I would say to me to really summarize the value of this that I've seen for myself and for our patients, is that it heals the gut. I think we have so many people with gut dysfunction, and they're trying to fix it with enzymes that they're taking. But if they could make their own enzymes, not only for their gut, but for every other part of the body, because everything in the cell runs on enzymes. So if you can get your enzymes working properly, your cells are going to work properly, they're going to grow properly, you're going to think better. You're going to feel better. You're going to have stronger muscles, you're going to sleep better.

In my thinking, this is one of the more fundamental supplements that people need to be thinking about if they're really trying to recover and repair from all the stress and hassle and the infection and all that that's been going on in the last three years. We need a powerful supplement that's very easy to take. You can just do this in the morning and you're basically done. You don't have to do it twice a day unless you're engaged in some vigorous exercise program. But I think it's a great product and I'm just thrilled that you've brought this over to the United States and made it available, David. I wanted to get you on our podcast because I knew you could extemporize on why this is such a valuable product. So any final words that you have in terms of what it's done for you or what it's done for your patients?

Dr. David Minkoff: I just was going to say, when you're talking about it, our clinic sees a lot of cancer patients like yours does. One of the things that we see in these patients is that they all come in anemic. And the standard medical thing as, well, we measure your B12 level and we measure your folic acid level. We measure your iron level. And those look okay. And then we sort of have this resort to, well, it must be anemia and chronic disease, or they just had too much chemotherapy before they came or whatever it is. But really, the main protein inside the red blood cells is hemoglobin, and it's a protein and it's made out of amino acids. We find when we high dose these people, instead of giving them one dose a day, give them three doses a day, they start to make blood.

There's all kinds of pharmaceutical stuff you could do to try to give them injections and stuff to try to make blood. But if you can do it nutritionally, which is what they really need... I had a Seventh Day Adventist patient, she was a breast cancer patient, and she came in with a hemoglobin of 5.5.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Wow.

Dr. David Minkoff: So this is critical.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Terrible.

Dr. David Minkoff: And when she came in the first day in the office, I had to lift her up to put her on the table because she was so weak. And I got her hemoglobin back, and I said, "I got to send you to the hospital. You got to get a blood transfusion." She said, "I'm not doing that. This is against my religion. I'm not doing that." I was like, "Oh my God, what are we going to do here?" So we started pumping her with Perfect Amino and nutritional IVs, and in three months, her hemoglobin was 11.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Wow.

Dr. David Minkoff: She built back her whole bloodstream. Didn't have to get any blood from anywhere. So it's very powerful. In the athletes and just day-to-day people, most people are deficient in proteins and because they can't process them.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Especially the elderly too. The elderly. Oh my gosh.

Dr. David Minkoff: For sure.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Yeah. Anyway.

Dr. David Minkoff: The other thing I was going to say is that I wrote this book a couple years ago. I'll just hold it up here. The website is bodyhealth.com. If people want the book, they can download a PDF form of it free. If they want to go to Amazon, it was an Amazon bestselling book, they can read it. It explains this in layman's terms so that people can understand this and might give them some help in trying to better their own situation or somebody in their family.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Yeah. The title of the book, I've read your book. It's a wonderful book. The Search For The Perfect Protein. Well, we can stop searching. Here it is. And ironically, it's really not a protein. It's the amino acids that you need to build the protein that your body absolutely has to have. So David, thank you so much for being on our show. This is a wonderful treat that all of us can get healthier with. So thank you so much for the work you're doing.

Dr. David Minkoff: Thanks, Ron. Love talking to you.

Dr. Ron Hunninghake: Thank you. Bye-bye now.

Outro: Thank you for listening to the Real Health Podcast. If you enjoy this episode, be sure to subscribe and leave us a review. You can also find all of the episodes and show notes over at realhealthpodcast.org. Also, be sure to visit Riordenclinic.org where you will find hundreds of videos and articles to help you create your own version of Real Health.