

CasePerformance

June Newsletter

Part II



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Here is the news that we'll cover in Part II of this month's newsletter....

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Hello,

Glad to see that you're tuning into Part II of this month's newsletter! I'm confident you found value in [Part I](#) of our fatherhood/male themed newsletter. [Part I](#) featured an excellent interview with crew/rowing athlete and medical student, James Magee, who shared with us his story in how he became involved in athletics, the role his father played in the process, and his mission to increase exercise education in medical school curriculum throughout the UK. In addition, Alex Leaf shared with us some great tips for aging gracefully. As he says, "... *you don't want to be out-gunned by your son or daughter, do you?*" The lessons and advice shared by these men extend out to everyone, regardless of gender. (So yes – All you ladies will benefit from reading Part I of this newsletter as well!!!)

In Part II of our June newsletter, we take a quick peek at the news of note here at CasePerformance. Then, we continue the father/male theme from Part I of our newsletter, discussing some supplements to help your libido and ways to protect against prostate cancer.

Respectfully,

Sean Casey

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II. Donations for CasePerformance Are Welcomed

As you've probably noticed while surfing around the CasePerformance website, we do not litter our pages with advertisements or have "Members Only" sections that require a paid subscription.

Why do we do this?

My goal is to reach as many individuals as possible. If an individual truly wishes to improve their health and performance, I want them to succeed. This holds true regardless if they are a multi-millionaire or those pinching pennies.

A Potential Downside & What You Can Do To Help

The cost of running a website in conjunction with paying for full access to the various sport science and nutrition research journals I use is extremely expensive. Also, all of the authors at CasePerformance put considerable time into writing the articles for this site. If you enjoy the free information provided on this site, we humbly ask you to show your support by making a small donation. Thanks for your support!

[CLICK HERE](#) to make a donation. Please know that **ANY AMOUNT** is greatly appreciated!

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III. Article News at CasePerformance

One new article has been added to the CasePerformance library since the last newsletter was sent out:



- 1) [Are you Fueling Your Internal Fire with Protein?](#) by Sean Casey

Hard training athletes need higher protein intakes. However, does turning your body into a fire breathing protein consuming machine have its drawbacks. This article checks out some recent discussions on the subject

Sorry, I got a little lazy this month with article writing. However, I can assure you I'll get back rolling at full throttle in July as I know a few of you are awaiting my report from the 2013 ISSN conference. Hope to have a few other interviews/articles mixed in during the month as well.

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Top Read Article in June at CasePerformance...



[Tribulus Part II - The Human Studies: Testosterone Booster or Marketing Hype?](#) By Sean Casey

The attributes associated with *Tribulus terrestris* are of mythical proportions. Are they true? Will they spike your testosterone similar to steroids? Better Sex? Outrageously huge muscles? In Part II we dissect through the human studies supporting/refuting its mystical claims.

^ A blast from the past here. Our Tribulus article, planted back in January 2012 grew new buds, growing to the top of our article viewing list!

V. Articles on Partner Websites

CasePerformance Contributors Phil Stevens, Brian Putchio both have their own websites as well which I have written on during the past month:

[Nutri-Bodies Blog: Nutrition Research & Exercise Physiology Blog](#)

* Owned and operated by Brian Putchio

* This is a great site for those looking for "quick hit" articles. During the past month I contributed the following "quick hit" articles:

[Business Models & Their Effect on Supplement Prices](#)

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VI. SuppVersity Corner Report!



CasePerformance is pleased to share a new feature in our newsletter – The [SuppVersity](#) Corner Report. It is an excellent website run by my friend [Adel Moussa](#) who writes a new post related to human performance on a daily basis. One of the things we do on the CasePerformance [FACEBOOK](#) page is highlight one of the posts in our SuppVersity Post of the Week. In our SuppVersity Corner newsletter, I plan to share those that made the cut each month. So for our inaugural SuppVersity Corner Report, I share the

Week of June 2nd:

[Overtraining, Undereating & Self-Inflicted Hypothyroidism: Thresholds for Low T3 and High Reverse T3 Levels at 8% & 15% Reduced Energy Intake + Exercise After Only 4 Days!](#)

CP Quick Thoughts

I find hypothyroidism and dieting to be an interesting topic since a low thyroid slows metabolism and impedes weight loss. This is something that many dieters forget when they start exercising like crazy + reducing their diets down to nil in the hopes of losing weight.

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Additionally, I found this article to be interesting as overtraining and under-eating are trademark causes of developing the female athlete triad (or as Adel more properly refers to it as “Athlete Syndrome”.) For those that know me, this is an area that I’m passionate about with respect to preventing and recently listed the topic as my [favorite series](#) to appear on SuppVersity.

Week of June 9th:

[Science Round-Up Seconds: NAC Reduces Inflammation, Muscle Injury & Cytokine Expression, but Impairs Anabolic Signaling, Satellite Cell Activity and Recovery](#)

CP Quick Thoughts

Although chronic systemic inflammation is not something to be desired, people often forget that acute, target specific inflammation is needed for muscle growth.

Week of June 16th:

I was gone this week attending the International Society of Sports Nutritionist (ISSN) Conference and just got back late. Thus, I was a few days late on my [SuppVersity](#) post of the week. However, in account of being late, I shared not 1 but 2(!) excellent posts I thought worth checking out.

#1. [Nutrigenomics - "Let Food be Thy Medicine and Medicine Be Thy Food." An Ancient Truth in Light of Fancy DNA Analyses](#)

CP Quick Thoughts

For those not familiar with the word nutrigenomics, it deals with the study of how the food we eat turns genes “on”/“off” and the impact it has on human health. I found this to be one of the most interesting topics during my nutrition education while attending the University of Wisconsin-Madison...2nd only to making whey protein during my food science lab.

^ Actually we weren’t “purposely” making whey. Rather, our lab class was focused on making cheese and whey was just a natural by-product of the process (heck, we’re from

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Wisconsin, what else are we going to make in food science class except cheese?!). Although my whey protein giddiness wasn't shared by any of my classmates, it was a pretty cool experience none-the-less.

#2. [Bulking Done Right: What Can the Latest 100 Day +1,000 Kcal/day Overfeeding Study Tell Us About How Baseline Fitness, Fatness, Hormones & More Affect the Outcome](#)

CP Quick Thoughts

Eat more food in a somewhat sensible fashion? Sign me up!

Week of June 23rd

[Science Round-Up Seconds: Prostate Cancer Special - Are You Going to Die From or With Prostate Cancer? Plus: What Can be Done to Influence This Fate?](#)

CP Quick Thoughts

Obviously, in writing this post, my friend Adel Moussa must have heard rumors that we were celebrating all things "male" in this month's CasePerformance newsletter. Being the good friend he is, Adel figured he'd save me some time and write an excellent post on prostate health!

Now if you're wondering why he doesn't mention saw palmetto, "the king" of healthy prostate supplements, I encourage you to check out his podcast discussion on it (hyperlinked in this article). His thoughts may come as quite a surprise to you so be sure to check it out!

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VI. "For Sport, For Life" – My Father's Role in Shaping the CP Tagline

My father swam at the university level back in the 1970's. One of the most important things my dad took from that experience, which he has shared with me on multiple occasions, is something his head swim coach told him. According to my father, his university swim coach would say, "Life is not about sports; sports are about life." Let's break that comment down a little...

"Life is not about sports..." In other words, your life should not dwell 100% around sports/training. Your life should be bigger/more rounded than that of just being an athlete. Yes, at times, sport may account for the large majority of your attention span. However, even in the peak of your competitive season, there should be more to you than just sport. Training should be balanced by other things - family, friends, hobbies, etc.

"...Sports are about life." You should take the lessons learned from sport/training and apply them to life (i.e. - importance of hard work, determination, respect, resilience, integrity, building relationships, understanding that the chips don't always fall your way, etc). In doing so, you'll not only have the building blocks for a successful career, but more importantly, the game plan for personal growth and passion in life as well. Unless you're in control of these latter characteristics, the dedication to training will fall apart.

Hearing my dad repeat this over and over again, the idea really of "What you're doing now isn't just for sport, it's for life" stuck with me. Over time, after talking with a former colleague, this developed into the mantra, and now tagline for CasePerformance, **"For Sport, For Life."**

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VI. CP Performance Tip: Ratcheting up the Male Libido!

In [Part I](#) of our June newsletter, Alex Leaf discussed the health benefits associated with regular sexual activity such as decreased cardiovascular risk, prostate health, etc. As he pointed out though these factors are only associated and the potential cause and effect between these variables are still being deciphered. Based off his research though, he hypothesized it may be related to both physiological factors (oxytocin) as well as psychological aspects (more health conscious to improve sexual performance, social support) that lend themselves to healthier outcomes with regular sexual activity.

However, let's be honest with ourselves, how many men out there partake in the activity of sex with the thoughts of CVD protection at the forefront of their mind?! My guess is not too many. According to the *Journal of Street Smarts & Common Sense*, it appears that more acute physical and psychological benefits are the driving forces behind the pursuit of sexual activity more often than not. (And yes, I say this knowing that the acute psychological benefits may enhance a long term relationship, but I think you get my point here ;-).

That said, I don't want to paint a broad brush over everyone and guess which potential acute or long term health benefit they seek when having sex. Rather, in this CP performance tip, I'm going to zero in on what's needed to get the ball rolling in the first place – A strong and healthy (some may even say raging!) libido. More specifically, we're going to hone in on a few supplements that purportedly ratchet up your libido and sexual health in general...

Maca Root

When I think of aphrodisiac supplements, the first one that comes to my mind is Maca root (*Lepidium meyenii*), which is an herb native to the Andes mountains of Peru. In a 2002 study completed by Gonzales et al, researchers ran a 12 week study in which 57 healthy men, between the ages of 21-56, were randomized into 1 of 3 groups: 1.5g/d Maca (n=30), 3g/d Maca (n=15), or a placebo (n=12).¹ Subjective feelings of sexual desire were assessed at weeks 4, 8, 12 using a 6 point likert scale. No differences were noted between groups at week 4. However, at weeks 8 & 12, 40-42% of those taking Maca root had improvements in sexual desire whereas 0% was noted in the placebo group.

In a population of individuals with mild-moderate erectile dysfunction (ED), Zenico et al also assessed the effects of 2.4g or placebo on sexual performance over a 12 week

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time period. Both groups experienced benefit (ah yes, the [almighty placebo](#) ;-), but those in the Maca group had significantly better outcomes with respect to improvements in ED vs. those in the placebo group despite having similar starting points.²

A third study, examining the effects of Maca on sexual desire in a small group of trained male cyclist (n= 8) has also been examined by Stone et al.³ In their study, 8 cyclist completed two 14 day periods of ingesting either 2g/d of a 5:1 maca root extract or placebo. One week separated the two trials. Following the trials, researchers found that Maca increased sexual desires, especially with respect to dyadic sexual feelings (ie- that with another) vs. solitary sexual desire (ie – that on own). This was not observed in the placebo condition

Although the above studies look interesting, all of them (especially the first two) have study design/results data issues that make it a little bit more difficult to evaluate the results observed by the researchers. None the less, it may provide some benefit for those looking to increase sexual desires.

Tongkat Ali

Tongkat Ali (TA) goes by many names including Ali's Walking Stick, *Eurycoma longifolia* Jack, Nature's Viagra and many more. Anecdotally, I have heard various success stories with respect to it revving up one's libido. Thus, I was slightly surprised that only one study (to my knowledge) has examined the effects of tongkat ali on sexual desires. In a study completed by Ismail et al, 109 healthy men between the ages of 30-55 were randomized to receive 200 mg of TA extract or placebo for 12 weeks.⁴ No differences were noted between groups with respect to both sexual libido and sexual satisfaction at baseline, 6 weeks and 12 weeks. They do report significant improvements in erectile functioning in the TA group vs. placebo. However, the research team fails to provide baseline data for comparison purposes which makes these latter results impossible to really evaluate.

Looking more on an overall "sexual health" perspective, Ismail et al, did find that in a subset of the TA group, those with poor semen quality did tend to see a normalization effect with respect to improving seminal fluid volume (18%) and motility (44%). In other words, it increased these variables to a level equal to those with "healthier" sperm at the study's onset. If you combine that with the results of Tambi et al, who found improved semen quality in young men (age 32) with fertility issues taking 200mg/d⁵ this supplement may be of greatest benefit for those looking to improve overall sexual health parameters vs. pure libido enhancement. Not to say it won't enhance libido, it just hasn't been reported in the literature to date.

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Fenugreek

A lesser known plant, Fenugreek (*Trigonella foenum - graecum*), may be one of the new "hot" ingredients appearing in various aphrodisiac supplements soon. In a recently published study (2011), Steels et al. randomized 54 healthy sexually active men (mean age – 41; BMI ~26-28) into a placebo group or one supplemented with 600mg fenugreek+ trace minerals per day for a period of 6 weeks.⁶ At 0, 3 and 6 weeks participants completed the DISF-SR survey which assess 4 domains: sexual cognition/fantasy (SC), sexual arousal (SA), sexual behaviour/experiences (SB) and orgasm (O). At baseline, values for each domain were relatively the same for both groups. However, those in the fenugreek group showed significant improvement at week 3 with respect to SA, SB and O. At week 6, the fenugreek group had significant improvements in all 4 domains, especially those pertaining to erection hardness and duration of orgasm. Improvements were not observed in the placebo group at either of these time points.

Now that we've discussed supplements that increase sexual arousal, let's turn a slight sidestep and examine supplements that help maintain/increase hardness as erectile dysfunction (ED) differs from sexual arousal...

Citrulline

Cormio et al. completed a 2 month pilot investigation, involving 24 middle aged men (mean age – 56.5 +/- 9.8 years) who reported “*mild to moderate reduction of penile rigidity that still allowed some kind of vaginal penetration but not satisfactory penetration and/or completion of successful intercourse.*”⁷ All participants followed the same protocol: 1st Month: Placebo. 2nd Month: 3 g/day of L-citrulline (divided over 2 doses)

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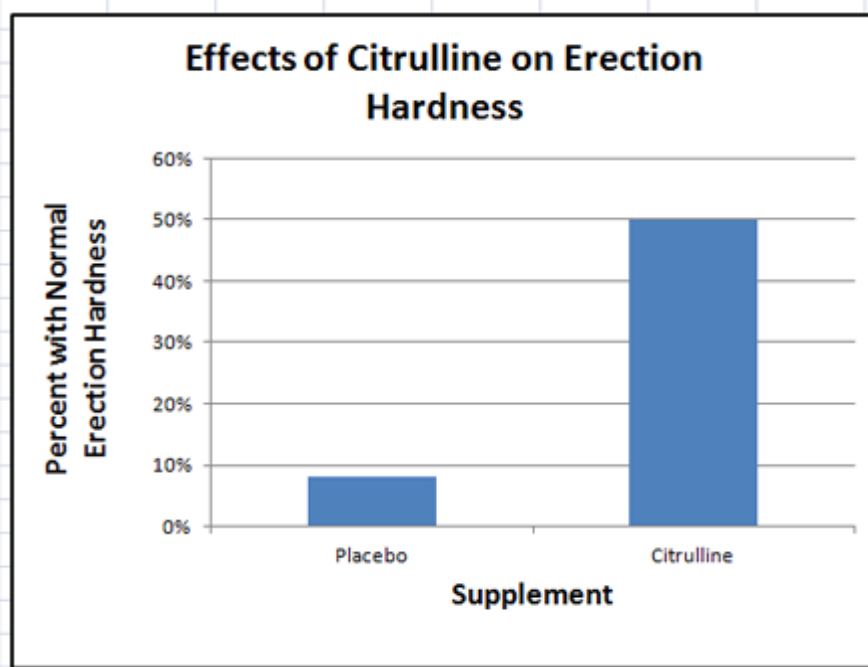


Figure 1. Effects of citrulline on erection hardness in men with mild to moderate erectile dysfunction. Differences between those in placebo and citrulline are statistically significant. Image created by Sean Casey

As seen in Figure 1, at the end of the first month, only 2/24 participants (8%) reported having normal erection hardness which was defined as “*Penis is completely hard and fully rigid*”. However, while taking 3 g of l-citrulline per day, 12/24 individuals (50%) reported having normal erection hardness.

Yohimbine (Yohimbe)

Yohimbe has long been used by those suffering from erectile dysfunction as it appears to assist in relaxation of smooth blood vessels; thus resulting in increased penile blood flow. In a 1998 meta-analysis featuring 7 placebo controlled, double blind studies, Ernst & Pittler found that overall, those taking 5 -10 mg of yohimbine, 3-4x/day, experienced significantly better outcomes vs. those taking placebo (odds ratio = 3.85) with respect to improvements in erectile function. However, Ernst and Pittier noted that 34-73% of participants appeared to be positive responders. Similar results were observed by Guay et al⁹ who assessed the effects of increasing yohimbine doses on erectile function in 18 men with organic erectile dysfunction. In their study, which lasted 8 weeks, each individual received 5.4 mg Yohimbine HCL 3x/day for 4 weeks, followed by 4 more weeks at double dose (10.8g, 3x/day). Half of the individuals participating were "positive responders" which was defined as having successful intercourse for at least 75% of

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attempts. Positive responses tended to have less severe erectile dysfunction at the start of the trial. Additionally, positive responders tended to do better with the higher doses (10.8g vs. 5.4g) whereas no difference was observed in non-responders.

Korean Red Ginseng

Korean red ginseng is another aphrodisiac that purportedly increases erectile dysfunction. Is it effective? I'll assign that as your homework for the science minded people out there, using the tools I shared with you in the [Understanding Research](#) section of our website!

Check back though as I'll post my answer at month's end after you've had a few weeks to look over it yourself

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That wraps up this CasePerformance newsletter. Hope you enjoyed our 2 Part fatherhood/male themed newsletters for the month of June... Let it be known that we have an excellent newsletter planned next month. Included is an interview with Christina Anderson who recently completed her first figure model competition. Additionally, a guest writer shares with us some scathing observations of what's gone horribly wrong with respect to the behavior/etiquette of many individuals, likely stalking a gym near you!

Last but not least, thanks for being a part of the team. We look forward to hearing your feedback on anything and everything so drop us a note on [FACEBOOK](#).

And as always... Train smart, train hard and leave the excuses to someone else!

Sincerely,

[The CasePerformance Team](#)