



Press release

Nutritional supplements in the focus of competitive sports - an interview with Dr. Frank Styra

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As an orthopaedic specialist and doctor at the Bavarian Olympic Training Centre, Dr. Frank Styra is an expert when it comes to the medical care of top athletes. Not least because he himself was a competitive athlete for many years. Dr. Styra completed his training as an orthopaedic surgeon in renowned clinics and later specialized in the treatment of competitive athletes at one of the leading sports clinics, the Media Park Clinic in Cologne. Today, he runs the prestigious orthopaedics clinic at Stiglmaierplatz in Munich together with two colleagues. For MITOcare, he sheds light on the role of nutritional supplements in competitive sport and provides insights into their importance for athletes at the highest level.

MITOcare: Dr. Styra, what are the physiological reasons behind the widespread use of nutritional supplements in high-performance sport?

Dr. Styra: The use of nutritional supplements in high-performance sport is based on multifactorial aspects. On the one hand, they address the increased metabolic demands of athletes induced by intensive training and competitions. They are crucial for the optimization of the nutrient supply, which contributes to the maintenance and enhancement of muscular and cardiovascular performance. They also play a significant role in regenerative processes by supporting muscle repair and replenishment of energy reserves, which is essential for long-term health and performance.

The essential role of micronutrients in high-performance sport

MITOcare: Which specific nutritional supplements do you consider essential for athletes?

Dr. Styra: The basis is an adequate supply of essential micronutrients. In addition, protein supplements, creatine monohydrate and specific amino acids, such as branched-chain amino acids (BCAAs) or L-glutamine, are often an integral part of athletes' nutrition plans. However, it is critical to emphasize that such supplements should only play a supporting role in combination with an already nutrient-rich, balanced diet.

MITOcare: How do you assess the safety and effectiveness of dietary supplements?

Dr. Styra: The safety and effectiveness of these products is of paramount importance. In my practice, I work closely with nutritional experts and manufacturers to ensure the quality and purity of recommended supplements. It is imperative that products undergo rigorous testing and certification to minimize the risk of contamination or the presence of banned substances.

MITOcare: How do nutritional supplements support the regeneration of athletes?

Dr. Styra: Regeneration is a critical factor in competitive sports. Nutritional supplements can support this process by optimizing muscle repair and growth potential, exerting anti-inflammatory effects and contributing to the restoration of glycogen stores.

MITOcare: Do the supplementation approaches differ between endurance and strength athletes?

Dr. Styra: Yes, definitely. Endurance athletes often benefit from supplements that promote mitochondrial energy production and efficiency, such as B vitamins and iron. Strength athletes, on the other hand, might focus more on creatine and protein to increase muscle growth and strength. Individualized adaptation is essential here.

Supplementation as a complement to a solid dietary basis

MITOcare: What is a common misconception about dietary supplements?

Dr. Styra: A common misconception is that supplements can compensate for a suboptimal diet. This is a fundamental fallacy. Supplements should be seen as a supplement to an already nutrient-rich diet, not as a substitute for poor eating habits.

MITOcare: You have developed a special Ortho series together with MITOcare. What were your motivations?

Dr. Styra: MITOcare's product range already included various nutrient combinations for different medical areas. However, there were no suitable products in the portfolio for orthopaedics. This gave rise to the idea of developing specific products tailored to the special needs of orthopaedics.

MITOcare: Why are nutritional supplements particularly important postoperatively?

Dr. Styra: Postoperatively, the body is in a state of increased regeneration, which means an increased need for specific nutrients. Food supplements can help to compensate for these nutrient deficiencies, which may not be covered by the normal diet alone.

MITOcare: What types of nutritional supplements do you most often recommend after surgical procedures?

Dr. Styra: This varies depending on the type of surgical procedure and the individual needs of the patient. In general, however, protein supplements, essential vitamins such as vitamin C and D, and minerals such as iron and zinc are often recommended, as they play a central role in wound healing and bone regeneration.

The medical debate on food supplements

MITOcare: What considerations or precautions should patients take when taking dietary supplements?

Dr. Styra: It is essential that patients do not take dietary supplements on their own without consulting their doctor. Some supplements can cause interactions with medication or have a negative impact on specific health conditions. We doctors also need to take a closer look at dietary

supplements in order to identify the optimal supplementation for our patients.

MITOcare: How do you assess the timing and duration of supplementation after orthopaedic surgery?

Dr. Styra: The timing and duration of supplementation should be adjusted individually. Normally, supplementation begins shortly after the surgical procedure and continues until the patient has fully recovered. Regular review and adjustment with the attending physician is essential.

MITOcare: Do you have any final advice for athletes who are interested in nutritional supplements?

Dr. Styra: My most important advice is to understand the importance of a balanced, nutrient-rich diet. Ideally, the majority of the required nutrients should be obtained from food. Supplements should be considered as complementary support, especially for high performance athletes, but also for amateur athletes whose nutritional needs often cannot be met through normal dietary habits alone.

MITOcare: Thank you very much, Dr. Styra, for the enriching insights and your time.

Dr. Styra: It was a pleasure. I hope that the understanding of the correct use of nutritional supplements in a sports context will continue to grow.

