

# The "Anabolic Window" Stack

by Eric Schwartz

In the never-ending pursuit of building muscle, we often look for every edge that we can get. We train hard (not just go through the motions), we have to eat enough to fuel our workouts, and we have to get enough rest in order to properly recover. Once these three things are in place we can look to other areas to get even better results. One area that can really amplify results is nutritional supplementation that addresses the topic of "nutrient timing".

What is nutrient timing and how can it benefit you? The time of day that you take specific nutrients has a big effect on how your body will respond to those nutrients. For example, you can take in simple sugars late at night while sitting on your couch and watching television and they will most likely go to fat storage. However, take in those same simple carbs after a hard workout and they get stored as glycogen rather than fat. The same nutrient and same amount, but change the time and you may get a radically different result.

When I first started training years ago, I was told that there was a "window of opportunity" that lasted about two hours after a workout. I was told that my body would literally soak up nutrients during this time and would use them for muscle recovery and growth. This window is what I'm referring to as the "anabolic window." My fellow bodybuilders told me that by taking in an easy-to-digest shake with protein and carbs right after I trained would halt "catabolism" and jump start anabolism. For bodybuilders, this is the name of the game. Back then I didn't even know what the technical words meant, but I started hitting the shakes after training and I was getting real results. I was recovering and building muscle more quickly.

Later, I started doing some research and realized that there was legit science behind this concept. Even so, I didn't need the scientific proof as I had the physical proof. Science is good, but I'll take results any day of the week. Eventually, when I started competing, addressing this nutritional window became a critical part of my success. Still, what didn't jibe was that I couldn't figure out where this magical two hour window came from. I thought it was more theory than fact. I started questioning the logistics... Is it really only two hours? Is post-workout the only time for this window? What about pre-workout? What about during the workout?

Fast forward to a few years ago. The era of pre-workout supplements was upon us. There were these cool new formulas that promised greater energy, pumps, strength and focus. Who wouldn't want that for their workout? We are always looking at ways to take our training to the next level and push harder in the gym. After all, if you can't push it in the gym you're not going to grow. So I started using Shock Therapy. I'd sip on Shock Therapy about 30-45 minutes pre-workout and by the time I hit the gym, I would be focused and energized and ready to tear the place up. Shock Therapy can really enhance your focus,

pumps, energy and strength. Ok, so I got pre-workout out the way.

As serious bodybuilders, we know that we have to eat every 3 hours to keep a steady supply of aminos and nutrients in our blood stream. I've often felt that the ideal situation would be to have an IV drip hooked up supplying a constant flow of nutrients. That obviously isn't practical, but that doesn't mean that we can't take advantage of the intra- portion of the anabolic window. An easily digested formula that supplies fast-acting protein, free form aminos and simple carbs would be extremely beneficial during this time. Think about it... You can supply fuel to train hard, aminos to start recovery and critical electrolytes and key ergogenic aids to replenish the body, all during your workout.

Also, imagine a nutrient that can buffer lactic acid, allowing you to do more reps and more weight... Man that would be a score. This is what beta alanine does by increasing carnosine levels in the body. The ideal formula for an intra-workout product should definitely include this ingredient. Enter Intra-Aid, an intra workout drink that supplies all of these factors in a great tasting formula. When Universal first introduced this product, I was a little skeptical. Call me old fashioned but back i the day, no one was talking about the importance of nutrition during the workout. I was wrong.

Today, I sip Intra-Aid during my workout. It helps me train harder and longer and recover more quickly than before. This stuff is a true bodybuilder's workout drink. Leave the sports drinks to the endurance athletes. For me, having protein, amino acids, carbohydrates and electrolytes in one formula means muscle and liver glycogen resynthesis, increased anabolism, decreased catabolism, increased protein synthesis, faster recovery and the ability to train at a higher intensity. I believe Intra-Aid is really the most complete intra-workout formula available.

So pre-workout and intra-workout were the tools I recently learned about and started using with great success. Now I want to get back to the nutrition following lifting. Like I said before, when I first started getting serious, post-workout nutrition is what the other bodybuilders were telling me about. What I know today is that the post-workout period is a critical time to get in nutrients and take advantage of some natural anabolic hormones. I've been an advocate of post workout shakes since I was introduced to them. I've even "homebrewed" my fair share of post-workout shakes, trying to create something with the right combination of nutrients. Most of my creations worked okay, but tasted really bad. I used to think that my life would be so much easier if I had a product that had all the key ingredients and a great taste, and I didn't have to mix 6 or 7 different powders to get it. That's where Torrent comes into play.

In my opinion, Torrent has a powerhouse formula that is designed for recovery and it tastes downright delicious. As I learned when I was younger, good post-workout nutrition should consist of both protein and carbs--not hard to digest carbs, but fast-acting, simple carbs. What I do is I start sipping on Torrent immediately after lifting, and continue to sip on it on my way home from the

gym. After that, I have a solid food meal within 45 minutes and I am golden.

The true anabolic window includes pre, intra and post workout nutrition. Taking in certain nutrients during this critical time can really make all the difference. If you do it right, you can achieve your goals faster. That means more muscle and more return for your efforts in the gym. And that science? Well guess what? Turns out that science has definitely confirmed the importance of nutrient timing after all. Recent findings at the ISSN conference have confirmed that carbs, protein and aminos and other nutrients can definitely enhance your gains when timed in and around your workout. Nutritional strategies pre-, intra-, and post-workout can make all the difference for shedding bodyfat, building lean mass, and increasing strength. Who doesn't want that?

So to summarize, here is my "anabolic window stack". It's simple and direct. I've seen others call it the "big picture" stack, but it's all the same thing. Here's what I do and how I do it:

- Shock Therapy – 1 scoop, 30-45 minutes pre workout
- Intra-Aid – 1 scoop, sipped slowly during training
- Torrent – 3 scoops, immediately after training

I know plenty of other lifters who are also following this exact same supplement program. Give it a try. I think you'll see some real gains.