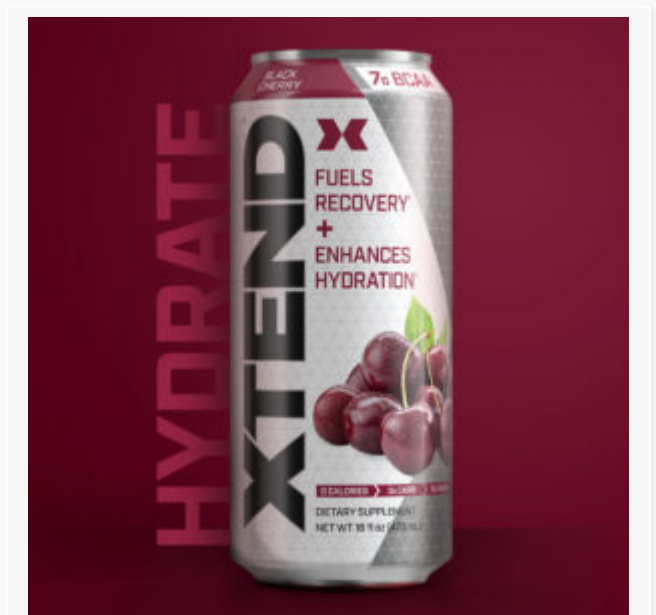


Xtend CARBONATED Further Revolutionizes BCAA Supplements

written by Mike Roberto | December 28, 2018

2018 was the year the Sports Nutrition industry took over the refrigerator shelves, tackling industry energy drink titans who got lazy on the job and failed to innovate their formulas. One of the major players in this 'fridge space coup' was *Nutrabolt*, creators of Cellucor. The brand launched C4 on the Go Carbonated cans, and hasn't looked back since, releasing new flavors practically every month (and they've *really* gotten good at them lately).



Time to make some space in the fridge – Xtend Carbonated is here with a full 7g BCAA and still stimulant-free!

Fizz is in

From calorie-free sparkling water to energy drinks to these new pre workouts, carbonated drinks are the *hot* thing right now, but one market segment was still yet to get the fizz treatment: BCAA supplements. We've seen a few pixie-dusted products, but never the real deal, with 5g+ of actual BCAAs.

Not anymore, thanks to **Xtend Carbonated**, announced just at the tail end of 2018. Xtend is famous for bringing BCAAs to the market, and now they're looking to repeat that success in the cold ready-to-drink section too. Local retailers are going to have to make a bit more space in those refrigerators, because the word is that these are *delicious*, and *perfectly* carbonated.

And like all other supplements that contain the Xtend name, there's 7g BCAAs in each serving.

We get into the full story and the ingredients below, but first, sign up for PricePlow's deal alerts so you don't miss new flavors and price drops as they

come:

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Mike's Xtend Carbonated Review

Before we get into the story, if you're interested in listening and seeing which flavors Mike likes best, then watch his review below, and then we get into the back-story and ingredients:

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Normally, we get into the ingredients and science in this area, but we think the story is even more interesting. The quick label rundown, however, is 7g BCAA (2:1:1 ratio), 1140mg Electrolyte Blend, and 1g Citrulline Malate, combined of course with carbonated water and flavors. A full analysis is lower in the article.

The full Xtend Carbonated story



It's been about a year and a half since Nutrabolt acquired Scivation, the brand that created the Xtend flagship BCAA supplement. Things remained relatively the same, with a few new flavors here and there, but no major changes for a year or so.

Behind the scenes, Nutrabolt was busy taking building expertise in the carbonated pre workout drink market, with their C4 Carbonated. They were also fine-tuning their proteins with releases like Iso Pro. With those skills fresh, it was time to transfer them to Xtend – with a major rebrand as well.

The move to Xtend – the *brand*



The Xtend rebrand is well underway, led in part by Xtend Pro

First, Nutrabolt started moving from “Scivation Xtend” to “Xtend Original”, turning *Xtend* into the brand.

They then released **Xtend Pro**, a pure *whey protein isolate* with some added BCAAs to get you to the uncompromising 7g per serving. *Every Xtend product contains 7g BCAAs – always!*

Next up, **Xtend Elite**, the *Peak02* cordyceps powered workout supplement, took the endurance supplement throne from Scivation Xtend Perform.

And finally, it’s time to take on the fridge section with that same trusted Xtend Original formula. But one problem: **it is *not* easy to suspend or carbonate 7g BCAA!**

The daunting task of Xtend Carbonated: From 26 to 4 Top Flavors

Even with their ever-improving experience flavoring C4 Carbonated, Xtend and its high dose of BCAAs brought a completely different challenge. Nutrabolt put a *ton* of work into it, telling us the following:

First, they tested 26 different flavors to see what would be most enjoyable in a canned, carbonated version. The four winners were the ones originally launched:

- **Glacial Grape**
- **Black Cherry**
- **Blue Raspberry Ice**

- Kiwi Berry Blast



Don't forget the Glacial Grape flavor too!

34 Flavor Revisions on the chosen four flavors

Not only that, but a ton of time was then spent following up on the *perfect* amount of flavor system and carbonation. In fact, amongst the four flavors above, they produced 34 different versions until they were perfectly happy.

What were the challenges here? Nutrabolt chimed in:

- *Changing ratios of acid, sweetener and flavor.*
- *Adjusting levels of carbonation to get the right balance of the sensation of bubbles and the appropriate intensity of flavor.*
- *Manipulating individual flavor characteristics to achieve the correct overall profile (i.e. fruity, candy, ripeness, juiciness, tartness, etc.).*
- *Exhaustive internal taste testing to determine the best profile for each flavor (i.e. comparing multiple iterations of Blue Raspberry until the consensus favorite was reached).*

– Greg Tetzlaff, Nutrabolt Product Education Team

Carbonating BCAAs is a finicky process

It is definitely challenging to flavor 7g BCAA in this type of format because there is a delicate balance between too much and not enough carbonation. Having some carbonation provides a pleasant consumer experience whereas too much can drown out the flavor profile. Further, because carbonation can “sting” your palate, it is important to find the right amount of added acids. The carbonation adds a layer of complexity that we have to solve for and we aren’t able to just apply the same solutions that we would for some of our powdered products.

Lastly, I would say that we are always tweaking things trying to get better and we never rest on our accomplishments. Just because we have launched the flavors in market doesn’t mean we’re forgetting about them, we aim to constantly improve upon our products and we’re just getting started.

– Greg Tetzlaff, Nutrabolt Product Education Team

Long story short? This is no half-assed product launch you’re witnessing here. This is how the *pros* do it.

Now let’s talk about the ingredients, which Xtend fans should already be familiar with:

Xtend Carbonated Ingredients

Each can contains 16oz, containing the following in a single serving:

- **7g BCAA (2:1:1 ratio)**

SUPPLEMENT FACTS

Serving Size: 1 Can (16 fl oz)

Servings Per Container: 1

| | Amount Per Serving | %DV |
|--|--------------------|-----|
| Calories | 0 | |
| Total Carbohydrate | 0 g | 0%* |
| Sugars | 0 g | ** |
| Sodium | 250 mg | 10% |
| Potassium | 190 mg | 5% |
| L-Leucine | 3500 mg | ** |
| L-Isoleucine | 1750 mg | ** |
| L-Valine | 1750 mg | ** |
| Electrolyte Blend Sodium Citrate, Potassium Chloride, Sodium Chloride | 1140 mg | ** |
| Citrulline Malate (1:1) | 1000 mg | ** |

*Percent Daily Values (%DV) based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

**Daily Value (DV) not established.

Other Ingredients: Carbonated Water, Citric Acid, Natural & Artificial Flavors, Malic Acid, Sucralose, Sodium Benzoate (preservative), Acesulfame Potassium.

Same Xtend formula with an impressive 7g BCAA... but built with *carbonated water!*

Every Xtend product must bring **7g of the three branched-chain amino acids**, and just because it's incredibly hard to suspend and carbonate doesn't mean Nutrabolt could weasel out of their commitment to customers.

With a 2:1:1 ratio, you get 3.5g leucine, 1.75g isoleucine, and 1.75g valine. These three BCAAs are part of the nine essential amino acids, which means you *must* get them through diet or supplementation, since your body cannot synthesize them itself. Amino acids are the building blocks of proteins, and your body cannot build nor maintain muscle without them.

It's all about leucine!

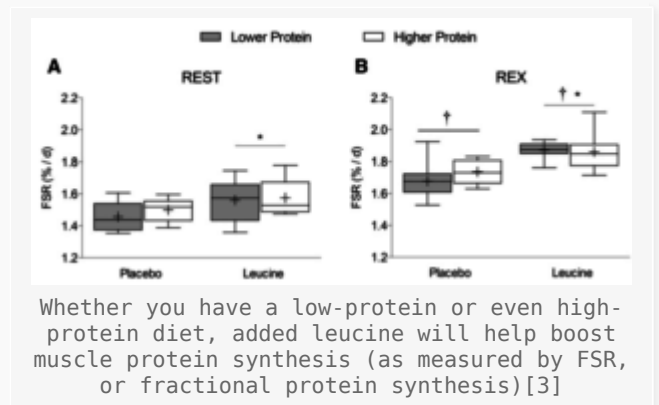
You get the most **L-leucine** in this formula, which is important since it's the most anabolic of the three branched chains. Leucine is directly responsible for triggering muscle protein synthesis.[1-4] In addition, it's a key activator of mTOR (Mammalian Target of Rapamycin), the process heavily involved in muscle protein synthesis and other cellular growth mechanisms.[4]

2:1:1 is the clinically-studied ratio, and that's what we'll always get with Xtend products. It's been shown to boost recovery speed, decrease rest periods between sets, improve endurance, and even potentially elevate fat oxidation.[5,6]

With a hearty 7g total BCAA, Xtend has always been fantastic about providing a serious 3.5g leucine.

- **Electrolyte Blend (Sodium Citrate, Potassium Chloride, Sodium Chloride) (1140mg)**

Xtend always ensures proper hydration and improved mineral status by adding some **electrolytes**, namely **sodium** and **potassium**. This is important since we get depleted when we're sweating, and water alone won't replace the lost minerals, and performance can drain when depleted (even with as much as 2% dehydration).



Electrolyte ions allow for energy transfer and ionic conductivity, which is important for nearly *all* mechanical processes our body undergoes. Once again, Xtend doesn't shy away from potassium, a notoriously difficult flavor to cover. Not a problem for the flavor kings at Nutrabolt.

- **Citrulline Malate (1:1) (1000mg)**

A blend yielding roughly half of the amino acid *L-Citrulline* and half of the krebs cycle intermediate *malic acid*, **citrulline malate** helps improve nitric oxide production by way of the l-citrulline converting to l-arginine.

The clinical dose of this ingredient is a bit higher (we typically like to see about 3g total citrulline), but this has always been a good dose for intra-workout purposes to keep the performance "Xtended" – oftentimes we'll want more of it in a pre workout supplement.

The malic acid involved is often beneficial for taste and flavor, and we can see that there's additional amounts in the "Other Ingredients" section

discussed next.

- **The Other Ingredients**

We of course start with **carbonated water** – just the right amount of bubbly per the team at Nutrabolt. After that come the flavoring systems, which include citric acid and a bit more malic acid.

On the sweetening front, we have a mix of **sucralose** and **acesulfame potassium** (“ace-k”), which is a near-must when dealing with BCAAs!

The initial flavors at launch



Black Cherry is the one that will probably be our favorite (given how much we like Midnight Cherry C4 Carbonated), but this is the unique one we're most excited for – Kiwi Berry Blast

As discussed in the “story behind the cans” above, Nutrabolt is launching with the following four flavors:

- **Glacial Grape**
- **Black Cherry**
- **Blue Raspberry Ice**
- **Kiwi Berry Blast**

Given how aggressive the company is with flavoring, we expect to slowly see more – but it will all depend on how fast these fly off the shelves! We'd reasonably expect a tropical kind of flavor (Mango is superb in Xtend Original) as well as a citrus / orange flavor, and of course fruit punch. But who knows – maybe those just don't work with carbonation as well and we'll get more unique flavors.

What I *can* tell you is that Midnight Cherry (black cherry) is my favorite flavor in C4 Carbonated, so I'm expecting it to be excellent here as well... although Kiwi Berry Blast (whose can looks like a kiwi-*strawberry*) is the one I'm most intrigued about.

No artificial colors or dyes!

Great news – as this is a canned drink, Nutrabort didn't bother with the colors. Regular Xtend powder has plenty of artificial coloring (because hey, "color tastes better"), but this isn't necessary in a can. The newer flavors of C4 carbonated don't have colors either, which is something we lobbied for.

Stimulant-free

When consumers see a carbonated can, many assume "energy drink", but this is *not* energy. If you want an energized version of Xtend, you'll have to try Xtend Energy or its predecessor, Xtend Go. Both of these are of course powdered versions.

Zero-Carb, Zero-Sugar

Xtend Carbonated is zero-carb and zero-sugar, but remember that BCAAs contain some calories. Legally speaking, however, the FDA requires that free-form amino acid products state 0 calories, a law Xtend has always adhered to.

In the real world of human biology, consider this to have about 35 "calories" worth of usable energy. You can add it to your protein total if you're counting calories like a hawk.

Fizz is in, and now you can get yours with aminos too



Nutrabolt even knows how to pick the perfect shade of blue for their graphics... but note that there's no blue on the inside!

I was recently asked about some trends for 2019, and responded with some movement happening in the diet world. But I also quickly added that *"More Carbonated Cans are Coming"* – and Xtend Carbonated was the first one I had in mind.

Sparkling water is hot right now. Energy drinks and pre workout RTDs have never been more popular. Fizz is simply in.

And now you can get your fizz with a *legit* dose of BCAAs – especially that leucine, which we'll take any time, any place.

Nutrabolt is an unstoppable force right now, and this is yet another piece of the athletic puzzle. The bigger mass market brands should be very scared. The sports nutrition industry has seemingly figured things out, and are picking up the pieces left by the subverted sugar-laden big food companies.

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