

TESTED

Test: FRS Plus Sports Drink

By Dain Zaffke

FRS Plus: It's not the same old sugar-water cost: \$22.95 (16-ounce bottle) contact: frsplus.com; (877) 377-4968



Free Radicals aren't the mullet-sporting, rightwing, militia-type activists many people think they are—but they are every bit as dangerous. The by-products of hard exertion, free radicals are essentially molecules that float freely through your body, latching onto, and damaging, existing healthy cells. Science-types are becoming increasingly aware of this damage, and they're associating free radicals with premature aging, weakened immunity and over 60 diseases, including cancer and diabetes.

Frequent exercise elevates risk, especially when coupled with pollution, the sun's UV rays, a poor diet or lack of sleep. Green tea and vegetables are the

tried and true, best ways to combat free radicals. But New Sun Nutrition is set to change that with its Free Radical Scavenger (FRS) Plus energy drink.

FRS combines flavonoids (the antioxidant elements in onions, apples, red grapes and green tea) with 100-percent of the daily recommended amount of seven vitamins, to neutralize free radicals. Consumers have the option to go with the original or low carb formula. At 25 grams of sugar and 110 calories, the original is similar in composition to a can of Red Bull. The difference is, with all those vitamins, FRS is actually good for you.

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Not that FRS is comparable to Red Bull. It provides some pep, but nothing like that flying-high-rush that makes the Bull famous. It's more of a steady stream of energy that I really began to notice after a couple hours of hard riding, when fatigue should have come knocking. At the two-to-three hour mark, when my focus normally starts to fade, I noticed the same clear-headed feeling I usually have post-ride. Recovery was consistently better as well, with less soreness and more energy the next day.

I know that sounds exactly like advertorial, but I usually sway the other way when it comes to energy supplements. I normally get the reverse placebo effect, opting to think that I'm getting fitter, that my

form is finally coming around. But going on a ride sans-FRS wasn't the same. I'm a believer. And apparently, I'm not the only one who noticed a difference.

A completely independent study at Pepperdine University—with 11 elite-level cyclists and a 12-week "double-blind cross-over trial"—demonstrated FRS consistently decreased finishing

time by one-to-four-percent on a hilly, 30 kilometer time trial.

That kind of advantage may not sound like much, but considering EPO and blood doping don't give more than a ten-percent boost, one-to-four is nothing to shrug off. Athletes risk it all, health and career, for that ten-percent advantage. FRS on the other hand, is legal and supposedly good for you.

The folks at FRS don't stop there. They recommend everyone use the stuff, twice a day, everyday. This seems like a stretch. Considering a 16-serving bottle costs \$23, that adds up to about ninety bucks a month. With a decent down payment, that could be the monthly payment on a 2005 Ducati.

But if health is priority number one (doctors are beginning to serve FRS to patients with Parkinson's Disease) that cost is worth it. My recommendation: drink it before and during races and extra-hard rides. If you end up taking it every day, you have a habit comparable to cigarettes in terms of cost.

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