

The Balchem Beat

Issue 35

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**Introducing the Voices of
Science Video Series: Science
That Speaks. Voices You Trust.**

**2026: The Year Fiber & Protein
Redefine Wellness**

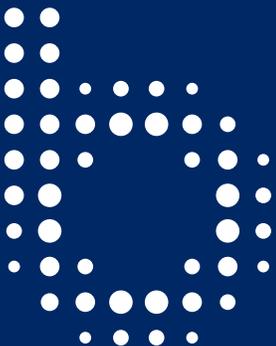
Unlocking Muscle Recovery
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Editor's Note

Dear Balchem Community,

As we welcome 2026, the spirit of innovation and scientific leadership continues to drive everything we do at Balchem. This issue of Balchem Beat is packed with insights and updates that reflect our commitment to advancing nutrition, wellness, and ingredient solutions for our partners and customers.

We're excited to kick off the year with the launch of our new "Voices of Science" video series, bringing you direct access to trusted experts and the latest evidence-based perspectives shaping our industry. You'll also find timely features on the mainstream rise of fiber and protein, new science supporting OptiMSM® for muscle recovery, and smart solutions for the evolving beverage market—including highlights from our recent participation at BevNET Live Winter 2025.

As always, we remain dedicated to transparency, quality, and collaboration. Whether you're seeking the latest market insights, regulatory updates, or formulation inspiration, we hope this edition empowers you to innovate with confidence in 2026.

Thank you for being part of the Balchem community.

**Warm regards,
Balchem Beat Editorial Team**





Introducing the Voices of Science Video Series: **Science That Speaks. Voices You Trust.**

We're excited to announce the launch of Balchem's new "Voices of Science" video series — a dynamic initiative designed to bring the expertise of trusted scientists directly to you. This series is part of our ongoing commitment to scientific integrity, transparency, and evidence-based solutions for nutrition professionals.

Why Voices of Science?

At Balchem, our work is grounded in solid science. The nutrients we develop are supported by careful research and a commitment to quality that our team takes seriously. Together with our partners, we bring a depth of expertise that we're genuinely proud to share with you as you navigate important decisions. The **Voices of Science** series gives you a closer look at the people and thinking behind our work—an open, straightforward way for us to show how we approach nutrition science and how we aim to support your business with reliable, up-to-date insights.





From the top: **Professor Igor Koturbash**,
Chair at the University of Arkansas
for Medical Sciences

Dr. Rima Obeid, Associated Professor at
the University of Saarland, Germany

Dr. Susan Smith, UNC Nutrition Research
Institute Deputy Director

Kick Off the Year with Dr. Jonathan Bortz

We invite you to watch the first video in
the series, featuring Dr. Jonathan Bortz,
as he explains the values and principles
that guide Balchem's scientific work, both
ethically and practically: [balchem.com/
hnh/science-tech/science/](https://balchem.com/hnh/science-tech/science/)

Let's start the year with science that
speaks—and voices you can trust.

Explore the full collection to stay
informed and inspired.



What to Expect

Each concise, expert-led video focuses on a single topic,
offering clear insights and actionable information.

The series features:

- Interviews with leading experts
- Scientifically accurate explanations
- Easy, enjoyable flow across the whole video series

Where to Watch

The "Voices of Science" series is available on:

- balchem.com/hnh/science-tech/science/
- [balchem.com/hnh/podcasts-webinars/
?_hnh_icon_category=science](https://balchem.com/hnh/podcasts-webinars/?_hnh_icon_category=science)
- youtube.com/@balchemhumannutritionhealth/playlists
- **Social media channels** including LinkedIn and Instagram



Jonathan Bortz, our Vice President of Science, shares how
our commitment to research and innovation drives solutions that
advance the industry and deliver real value for our customers.





2026: The Year Fiber & Protein **Redefine Wellness**

In the U.S.,

90%

of women and

97%

of men do not meet the recommended daily intake for dietary fiber.

Strong Start: Why Fiber and Protein Matter in 2026

Fiber and protein have officially gone mainstream. According to the latest trend reports, they're not going anywhere, especially as the \$62.9B GLP-1 market continues to grow.¹ Consumers are making every bite count, scrutinizing labels and ingredients looking for products that can meet their needs. At Balchem, we understand this and have the science-backed ingredients and formulation expertise to accelerate your product development to appeal to these health-conscious shoppers.

Fiber First: A Focus on Gut Health and Beyond

Digestive health is top of mind for consumers, with 37% of Americans saying it's a top benefit they seek from their diet.² Yet the reality is that more than 90% of women and 97% of men do not meet the recommended daily intake for



dietary fiber.³ Therefore, consumers are turning to gut-friendly products and are understanding more about the importance of digestion in overall wellness. At Balchem, we're proud to offer our customers functional ingredients that add prebiotic fiber to their products, including StabiliPro™ Inulin 1000.

Prioritizing Protein

Protein continues to take center stage. In fact, according to IFIC's 2025 Food & Health Survey, 70% of Americans reported they are actively trying to consume more protein, up from previous years.² This makes sense as adequate protein is especially important for those taking GLP-1 medications. At Balchem, we offer a variety of solutions to help our customers add protein to their food and beverage applications. Our Z-Crisps® are available with dairy or plant-based proteins that can be used in snack bars, trail mixes or as a topping, and our VitalBlend™ functional powders can deliver clean label, neutral flavor, customizable solutions for meal replacements, shakes, bars and beyond.

Creating Wellness Solutions

Connect with a Balchem representative to support your innovation needs today!



References:

- [1]Tastewise 2026 Food & Beverage Trend Forecast
- [2] International Food Information Council. (2025, October). A Focus on Food & Nutrition: 2025 IFIC Food & Health Survey.
- [3] U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025.



Unlocking Muscle Recovery with OptiMSM[®] at Just 1g/Day



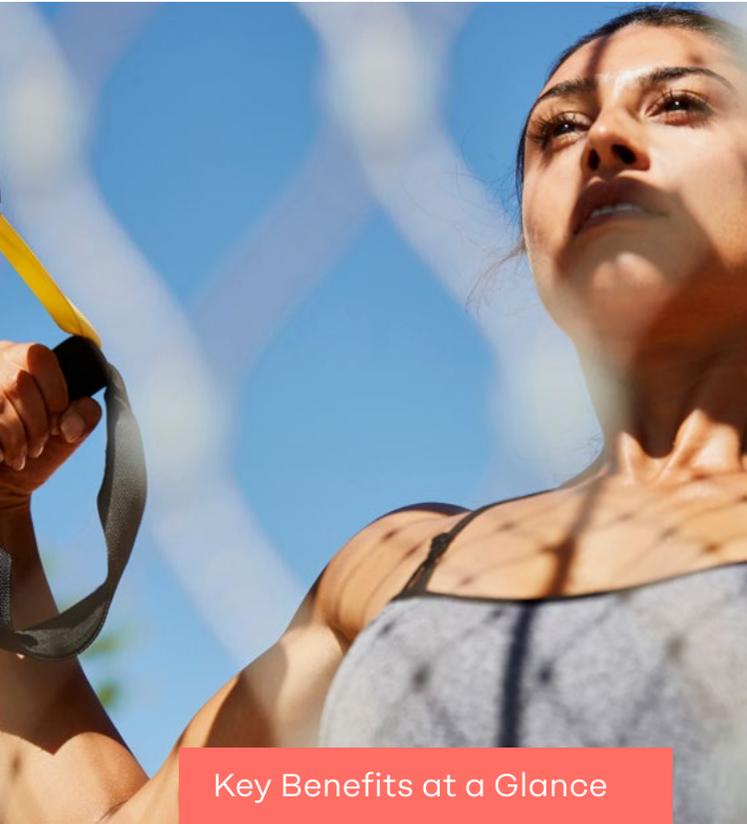
Balchem is excited to share new scientific findings supporting OptiMSM[®] as a powerful ally for muscle recovery, now clinically demonstrated at a daily intake of just 1g. This breakthrough offers athletes and active individuals a simple, effective way to optimize post-exercise muscle restoration.

The Science Behind OptiMSM[®]

OptiMSM[®] is a premium branded form of methylsulfonylmethane (MSM), renowned for its purity and efficacy. As a source of dietary sulfur, OptiMSM[®] plays a vital role in maintaining healthy joints, supporting antioxidant production, and aiding tissue repair after exercise. Recent research highlights its ability to

- **Reduce pain and discomfort** after exercise
- **Decrease muscle damage and soreness** after exercise
- **Lower oxidative stress** and support antioxidant response
- **Optimize the genetic response** to exercise induced inflammation





Key Benefits at a Glance

- Clinically **proven** muscle recovery at 1g per day
- **Supports** joint health and antioxidant capacity
- **Improves** skin firmness, texture, and elasticity
- **Reduces** post-exercise pain
- **Easy to incorporate** into tablets, capsules, powders, and gummies

OptiMSM®

A clinical study published in the journal *Nutrients* evaluated experienced runners supplementing with 1g per day OptiMSM® or placebo. After completing a half marathon (21.1 km), results showed significant improvements in gene expression related to muscle recovery and the immune response, demonstrating OptiMSM®'s ability to help the body bounce back faster after strenuous activity.

Why Athletes Choose OptiMSM®

According to a Nutrition Business Journal survey, 28 percent of sports nutrition consumers seek healthy muscle and tissue support, while 19 percent want faster recovery. OptiMSM® directly addresses these needs, making it an ideal choice for those looking to maximize their performance and recovery routines.

Trusted Quality and Safety

OptiMSM® stands out as the purest MSM available, produced in the USA through a proprietary four-stage distillation process for 99.9 percent purity. It is the only MSM brand to receive an FDA GRAS no action letter, ensuring safety and quality for over 30 years.

Ready to learn more?

Speak to our experts or visit OptiMSM.com for details on how OptiMSM® can help you optimize your potential.



Smart Solutions for a **Health-Focused New Year**

As the calendar turns, consumers are prioritizing health and wellness like never before. With the rise of GLP-1 medications, people are embracing new habits—and they're looking for companion products that fit seamlessly into their daily routines. Beverages are leading the way.

Why Beverages?

For GLP-1 users, beverages offer unmatched convenience and targeted benefits:

- **Low calorie**
- **Protein-enriched**
- **Low or no sugar**
- **Added fiber**

Balchem: Your Beverage Innovation Partner

At Balchem, we simplify beverage development through our **System Solutions** approach. Our integrated systems include:

- **Stabilizers** for consistency
- **Sweeteners** for balanced taste
- **Mouthfeel Modifiers** for texture
- **Nutrients** for functional benefits
- **Flavors + Colors** for consumer appeal

By streamlining these components we help you reduce complexity, manage inventory efficiently, and maintain control over your manufacturing process.





Karyn Cook, F&E Senior Marketing Manager

Balchem at BevNET Live Winter 2025

Balchem proudly participated as a **Silver Sponsor** at BevNET Live Winter 2025, reinforcing our commitment to beverage innovation. In a livestream interview, **Karyn Cook, Senior Marketing Manager**, highlighted how Balchem partners with brands and co-manufacturers to deliver **customized flavor systems and functional ingredients** that align with consumer trends and simplify development.

With nearly 1,000 beverage businesses in attendance, BevNET Live was the perfect platform to share our vision for collaboration and innovation.

Watch the interview:

[Livestream Interview with Karyn Cook](#)



Peace of Mind, Every Step of the Way

Partnering with Balchem means confidence in your product's quality and performance—so you can focus on creating beverages that delight consumers and support their health goals.

Explore our beverage capabilities and see how Balchem can help you move from concept to scale.

Visit: balchem.com/hnh/markets/beverages/

Contact us today to learn how Balchem can help you bring your next beverage concept to life.





Vitamin K2 Safety: CRN Sets Highest Observed Intake (HOI) Level for MK-7 Supplements

As consumer interest in vitamin K2 continues to rise, safety remains a top priority. The Council for Responsible Nutrition (CRN) has published its updated vitamin K2 chapter in [Vitamin & Mineral Safety, 4th Edition](#). For the first time, CRN establishes a Highest Observed Intake (HOI) level for MK-7 supplements, providing essential guidance for the industry.

What is a Highest Observable Intake?

The Highest Observable Intake or HOI is a key dietary risk assessment metric that identifies the highest intake level of a nutrient shown to be safe, even when no adverse effects have been documented. This milestone provides the industry with a science-backed framework to ensure product safety and consumer confidence.

CRN identifies **375 µg/day as the highest observable intake (HOI)** for supplemental MK-7 in adults.

What Is the New HOI for Vitamin K2?

CRN identifies **375 µg/day** as the highest observable intake (HOI) for supplemental MK-7 in adults. This level is based on robust clinical data and does not apply to individuals taking vitamin K antagonists (VKAs)

How Was the Vitamin K2 HOI Determined?

The updated chapter reviews more than 40 human clinical trials, with doses ranging from 58 to 462 µg/day for up to two years. Across these studies, no serious adverse effects were reported, and MK-7 showed no clinically meaningful impact on coagulation parameters in healthy individuals.

Why Is a New HOI Important for the Industry?

Establishing an HOI for MK-7 represents a major step forward for scientific understanding and responsible product development. It provides manufacturers, regulators, and health practitioners with evidence-based recommendations for this increasingly popular nutrient.

Learn more about CRN's updated safety evaluation and what it means for the future of vitamin K2 supplements at the link below.

View the Report: https://crnusa.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/09.2-CRNVMS4-VITAMINK2_MK7_FINAL-EHedits.pdf





Unlocking Growth in the VMS Category

Educating the Next Generation of VMS Users

Recent research highlights a significant opportunity for brands in the vitamins, minerals, and supplements (VMS) space: **younger consumers (ages 18-34) are less familiar with VMS products** and are less likely to have established routines. This group is open to education—if approached thoughtfully.

Key Insight

Only **49% of consumers aged 18-34 report using VMS products “very often,” compared to 56% of those 55 and older.** This gap signals room for growth through targeted education and engagement strategies.

Brands that demonstrate how VMS products can support personal goals, without overwhelming consumers with technical details, are well-positioned to build loyalty among this emerging audience.

Inclusive Messaging Drives Broader Engagement

Another critical factor influencing VMS usage is education level. **Consumers with higher education are more aware of health and wellness benefits,** leading to more frequent VMS use. However, to maximize market reach, brands should focus on crafting clear, accessible messaging that resonates with all education levels. Simplifying product descriptions—while maintaining professionalism—ensures inclusivity and avoids alienating any audience segment.

Key Insight

52% of consumers with a high school education or less use VMS products “very often,” compared to 67% of those with a college degree. Clear, inclusive communication can help close this gap and expand the market.

Takeaway

There is untapped potential in both younger consumers and those with lower awareness or education levels. **Brands that prioritize education and inclusivity in their messaging will be best positioned to capture new growth in 2026.**

Reference: Mintel: Vitamins, Minerals & Supplements - US - 2025





Events — See You There

11—13
FEB 2026

Vitafoods India
Mumbai, India

16—19
FEB 2026

ASB - Baking Tech
Chicago, IL

16—17
FEB 2026

**ILSI Workshop: Nutritional
Interventions for Healthy
Ageing**
Brussels, Belgium

16—17
FEB 2026

Regional IFT: FL
Orlando, FL

23—24
FEB 2026

**Regional IFT: Cascadia
Portland, Seattle**
Portland, OR and Seattle, WA

25
FEB 2026

Regional IFT: Vancouver
Vancouver, BC

2—4
MAR 2026

AMC
Oxon Hill, MD

3
MAR 2026

**Regional IFT:
Southern California**
Garden Grove, CA

5—7
MAR 2026

Arnold Sports Festival
Columbus, OH

10—12
MAR 2026

Research Chef's Association
Westminster, CO

Schedule a meeting with us here:



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