

Sports Nutrition: Peak Performance & Lasting Energy

WHAT DO NUTRIENTS DO FOR ME?

Working muscles require oxygen for energy. Select foods that fuel your muscles and provide energy so you can be on top of your game.

- ❖ **Carbohydrates and Fats** provide energy for your body and muscles. In short burst exercises, such as sprinting, jumping, or weight lifting, your body uses mostly carbohydrates (about 70-85% of total fuel). In long duration exercises which last from 30 minutes to over an hour, such as running or playing tennis, your body needs to tap into both fat and carbohydrates in almost equal amounts.
- ❖ **Protein** helps for repair and recovery of body tissues and keeps us alert during our competition. Muscles tear during exercise and require protein from your diet to help replenish muscle stores.

Foods to Choose!

Healthy carbohydrate rich foods include fruit, low fat whole grain muffins, whole grain crackers, yogurt, cottage cheese and fig bars.

Nutrient dense foods containing healthy protein and fats include nuts, seeds, and nut butters.

Sports bars provide a combination of carbohydrates, protein, and fat all in one. These are okay if you need a convenient source of energy.

Drink Fluids...	How much...
2 hours before the game	Drink 2 ½ cups (20 oz) of water
10-15 minutes before the game	Add 1 more cup (8 oz)
Every 15 minutes	Drink ½ cup (4 oz)
After the game	Plenty of fluids after the event and throughout the day



7 Steps to Help Prevent & Heal Injuries

1. WATER, WATER, WATER
2. Eat more whole foods (not processed)
3. Increase anti-oxidants & healthy oils to prevent pain and swelling. Anti-oxidants are found in fruits and vegetables. You can get healthy oils from salmon, tuna, walnuts, and canola oil
4. Vitamin C and Zinc help to form bone and cartilage and “glue” your cells back together – so try to eat Vitamin C-rich foods, such as citrus fruit, strawberries and tomatoes as well as cereal, meat, nuts and beans for zinc
5. Calcium (from low fat or fat free dairy) prevents injuries including stress fractures
6. Eat protein-rich foods at each meal
7. Get (at least) 8-10 hours of sleep every night

PRE-EVENT

Avoid large meals too close to the game. When you eat, blood flows to your stomach to help with digestion. When you exercise, the blood must go to your muscles instead of your stomach and food will take longer to digest. Unpleasant results can include mild cramps, nausea, vomiting, and gastric discomfort.

Avoid highly fatty foods and drink lots of liquids with your pre-game meals. Ideas of foods to eat before the game include pasta, cereals, bread, and vegetables. Players need enough time to digest their food, so eat at least one hour before the event.



DURING YOUR MATCH: Water is BEST! Sports drinks, such as “Gatorade[®]” can be used for endurance events lasting over one hour, like cross country running or tennis. Do not drink caffeinated beverages, soda, or coffee. Drinking these beverages may make you crash midway through your match.

If there is a long period of time (over 2 hours) between a meal and your game, eat a small snack. An example of a small snack would be an apple and peanut butter or 1 oz string cheese with 1-2 graham crackers.

POST-EVENT

Once the event is over, energy and fluids used must be replenished as soon as possible. Eat within 20 minutes and up to 2 hours after exercise. Appropriate food choices for after the game include whole grain carbohydrates, lean protein, and healthy fats (fats low in saturated fat).

Websites to visit for more information:

American Youth Soccer Organization

<http://www.ayso88.org/parents/kitchen.html>

Center for Young Women’s Health

<http://www.youngwomenshealth.org/nutrition-sports.html>

Medline Plus: Sports Fitness

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/sportsfitness.html>

Penn State: Nutrition Information Resource Center

<http://nirc.cas.psu.edu/fitness.cfm>

