



Sports Nutrition

Food is fuel! When participating in physical activity, whether that be participating in competitive or recreational sports, nutrition plays a critical role from our performance to recovery. Knowing how to properly fuel your body can elevate your game, finish your game or event stronger and faster, and assist in faster recovery. The energy we use during our activity comes directly from the food we eat. Eating a well-balanced diet full of nutritionally dense foods like whole grain carbohydrates, complete proteins, and heart healthy fats can dramatically benefit our performance and recovery.

Each macro nutrient (carbohydrate, protein, and fat) play an important role in the body and is critical that athletes or anyone participating in sports, eat a well-balanced diet consisting of all these nutrients. Athletes should avoid diets that encourage an extremely large deficit in one particular nutrient, such as an extremely low carbohydrate or fat diet.

Nutrition Basics

Carbohydrates:

The primary function of carbohydrates is to provide energy for the body, especially the brain and the nervous system. Recommended Daily Intake (RDI): 45-65% of total calories (225-325 grams for 2,000 calories/day).

Protein:

The primary function of protein is to build and repair cells and tissues. This includes supporting muscle development. Recommended Daily Intake (RDI): 10-35% of total calories (50-175 grams for 2,000 calories/day).

Fat:

The primary functions of fat is to transport, absorb, and digest fat soluble vitamins (A,D,E, and K) and help form hormones. Recommended Daily Intake (RDI): 20% to 35% of total calories (50-175 grams for 2,000 calories/day). *Consuming less than 10% of calories from **saturated fats** (< 22 grams for 2,000 calories/day).*

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Healthy Eating Continued...

Consider these ideas:

Nutrition Timing:

BEFORE:

The body calls on carbohydrates first when exercising. If carbohydrates are unavailable, the body will go to protein during moderate to high intensity exercise as a fuel source. Muscles will be broken down to provide that protein! Avoid this by consuming carbohydrates before your practice, game, or training session.

DURING:

Sporting event that last longer than 45 minutes will require fueling during the activity so the body does not go into a catabolic state. ACSM recommends athletes consume 30-60g of carbohydrates PER hour of training. Fueling during event is most effective when 30-60g of carbs are consumed in small amounts in 15-20 minutes. Rather than a large amount after 2 hours of exercises. Consuming a sports drinks during event is a great way to replenish and hydrate you during your sporting event.

Try this Homemade Electrolyte Recovery Drink:

- 1/2 cup fresh orange juice
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 cups raw coconut water
- 2 tbsp organic raw honey
- 1/8 tsp Himalayan pink salt
- Directions: Blend ingredients and chill

AFTER:

Working out depletes glycogen (the storage form of carbohydrate) and promotes protein breakdown. Eating the proper nutrients soon after a workout will help replenish this storage and enhance protein building. Choose a combination of carbohydrates and protein. It is best to stick with a carbohydrate:protein ratio of approximately 3 or 4:1 (e.g., for every 30 or 40 grams of carbohydrate, you should have 10 grams of protein).

Hydration:

Water regulates body temperature, lubricates joints and transport nutrients. Signs of dehydration can include fatigue, muscle cramps and dizziness. Staying hydrated can help stimulate blood flow to the muscles, which can reduce muscle pain. In addition, hydration can help flush out toxins which can worsen muscle soreness.

BEFORE:

Drink 16-20oz of water 4 hours prior to exercise. Drink 8-12oz of water 10-15 minutes prior to exercise.

DURING:

Drink 3-8 oz of water every 15-20 minutes if activity. If activity is lasts longer than 1 hour, you should consider hydrating with a sports drink to help replenish carbohydrates storages and electrolytes lost.

AFTER:

Check body weight and assess urine color. Drink 20-24oz for every 1lb of body weight lost within 2 activity.

Resources:

<https://blog.nasm.org/nutrition/refuel-repair-rehydrate-revitalize-sports-nutrition-for-optimum-recovery/>

<https://blog.nasm.org/nutrition/hydration-health-performance/>

<https://www.acefitness.org/education-and-resources/professional/expert-articles/5800/3-r-s-of-workout-recovery-nutrition>