

The importance of nutrition

Every competitive and recreational athlete needs adequate fuel, fluids, and nutrients to perform at their best.

It is the role of the sports nutrition expert (Registered Dietitian, RD) to advise athletes regarding appropriate nutrition needs before, during and after exercise, and for the maintenance of good health and optimal body weight and composition.

Sports Nutrition

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Prepared exclusively for:



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*Everything
to know to
prepare for
your next
event!*

Nutrition related to a sporting event

Diet Composition

The foundations for the diets of athletes in training are not substantially different from recommendations for the general population. However, athletes require additional energy to fuel physical activity and fluids to compensate for sweating.

Preexercise Meal-

A snack of 200 to 300 grams (g) of carbohydrates is recommended to be consumed 3 to 4 hours before exercise.

During Exercise-

Athletes should consume 30-60g of carbohydrates each hour, especially if the preexercise meal/snack was skipped. Also, 6-12 oz of fluid every 15-20 minutes is recommended.

Postexercise Meal-

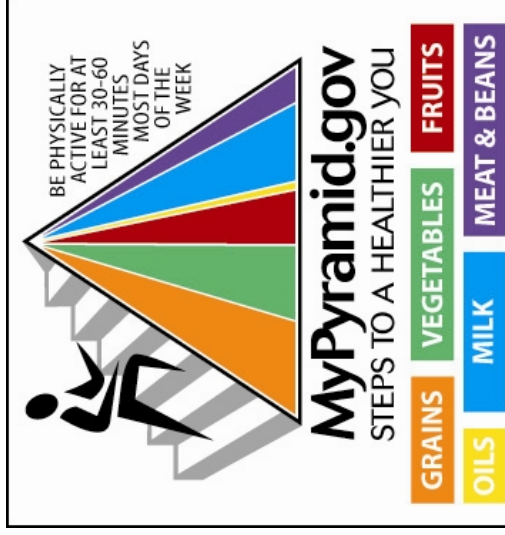
Consuming a meal or snack containing carbohydrates and protein in close proximity to the end of exercise is recommended to replenish glycogen stores and muscle/protein repair

Macronutrient Requirements

- **Carbohydrates**—Important to maintain blood glucose levels and to replace muscle glycogen. The current recommendations for athletes range from 6 to 10 g/kg body weight
- **Protein**—Builds and maintains lean body mass (muscles). Endurance athletes require 1.2-1.4g/kg body weight per day, whereas resistance and strength-training athletes may require up to 1.6-1.7g/kg body weight per day. These recommended protein intakes can generally be met through diet alone, without the use of protein supplements, if energy intake is adequate to maintain body weight
- **Fat**—Provides energy, a medium to absorb fat-soluble vitamins (Vitamins A, D, E, and K), and provides essential fatty acids (omega-3 and omega-6). Fat intake should not be restricted, although, athletes should not follow a high-fat diet either.

Hydration

- Maintaining proper fluid balance is essential to maintaining optimal performance
- Dehydration increases the risk of potentially life-threatening heat injury
- Athletes should remain well-hydrated before and during exercise
- **Before Exercise**—Drink generous amounts of fluids 24 hours before an event. It is recommended drinking 16-20oz of fluid 2-3 hours before the event
- **During Exercise**—6-12 oz of fluid every 15-20 minutes, beginning at the start of exercise



Beverages that contain 0.5-0.7g per 32oz of sodium are recommended during exercise lasting longer than 1 hour. (Ex: Gatorade®, Powerade®)

Hot and Humid Environments—The risk of dehydration and heat injury increases dramatically in these environments. Every precaution should be taken to assure that athletes stay well-hydrated.