



# Tips for Eating Before, During & After Activity

As coaches, we know that an athlete's performance on the field is fuelled by the eating habits they practice in their day-to-day lives.

Here are some tips and advice for helping your athletes to develop positive and lasting nutritional practices.

## Pre-Practice or Competition (3-4 hours Before)

### Types of food:

Mostly complex carbohydrates, moderate protein and low levels of fat.

### Why?

Carbohydrates digest more rapidly than fats or proteins, so the energy produced will be available faster.

### Tip:

Consuming meals high in fat before a competition or workout may cause stomach bloating, gas, and indigestion.

## Right Before or During Practice/Competition

### Types of Food:

Complex carbohydrates.

### Why?

To help replenish your athlete's muscles for the next workout or competition. Muscles are typically the most receptive to recovery during the first 30 minutes.

# 3 R's of Recovery

## Refuel

by eating  
carbohydrates

## Rehydrate

by drinking  
fluids

## Rebuild

with  
protein

## What About Sports Drinks?

Unless you are doing more than an hour of intense activity outside, water is sufficient for hydrating your athletes.

For intense and prolonged activity, sports drinks can be beneficial. Look for ones that are 6-8% carbohydrate concentration with small amounts of sodium and electrolytes.

## Examples of Foods That Will Help Fuel Your Athletes Before, During and After Competition

### Before

Whole grain cereal with non-fat milk and a piece of fruit

Fruit shake (e.g. bananas, strawberries or mango with 100% fruit juice and low-fat yogurt)

Bran muffin and low-fat yogurt

Whole grain toast with small amounts of peanut butter

String cheese, whole grain crackers and grapes

### During

Whole wheat toast with jam

Banana, apple or other piece of fruit

Low-fat yogurt

Dry cereal (non-sweetened)

Fat free chocolate milk

Energy bar

### After

Peanut butter and banana sandwich on whole wheat bread

Pasta with lean meat spaghetti sauce

Graham crackers and yogurt

Bean/legumes and brown rice

Turkey and cheese on whole wheat bread

## Types of Food to Avoid

Caffeine (chocolate, latte, coffee, soda)

Doughnuts and pastries, candy

Greasy foods high in fat (french fries, fried chicken, fried fish, pizza)

Fructose, high fructose, high fructose corn syrup

Highly sugared, refined cereals

References: Aja Gyimah, RD (2020) "Athletic Performance and Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport"