

Eating for Peak Performance

A Winning Eating Plan



runners and vegetarian athletes may be low in iron and this can affect their ability to concentrate and their energy level. Choosing a variety of foods from each food group is important for a winning eating plan.

Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating is the starting point for planning any healthy eating plan. Choose at least the minimum number of servings suggested in each food group every day (5-5-3-2). The larger serving numbers for each food group shown on Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating are not the maximum servings for athletes if they are at a healthy weight. Choosing more servings from the Grain Products and Vegetables & Fruit food groups is important to get the carbohydrates you need to fuel your body for sports. Foods from these groups should cover about 2/3 to 3/4 of your plate. The Milk Products group provides the nutrients needed to build strong bones and teeth. Foods from the Meat & Alternatives group are key sources of iron. Female athletes, distance

Drink or Slow Down

Your body needs water to keep cool and to deliver fuel and oxygen to your muscles. You should be drinking at least 6-8 glasses of fluids every day. Don't wait until you are thirsty before drinking. Drink before, during and after your game or practice to make sure that you are getting enough water to perform your best.

- ✓ Drink 2 glasses of water 1 to 1 ½ hours before your game or practice.
- ✓ For athletes who sweat a lot, drink 2 glasses of water 5-10 minutes before the start of the event.
- ✓ Take water breaks during your game or practice so that you are drinking about 300 mL to 1 L of cool water every hour. If you are exercising in hot temperatures or you sweat a lot, you should drink more.

Most athletes do not drink enough fluids to keep their bodies operating at peak performance levels. Thirst is not a good indicator of the amount of fluid that your body needs during intense activity.



Sport Drinks

For activities that last for one hour or less, water is the best choice. If your activity lasts longer than one hour, choose a beverage that has 4-8% carbohydrate (4-8 grams/100 mL). You can make your own sports drink by mixing: 2.5 mL (1/2 tsp) salt, 375 mL (1 ½ cups) sugar, 500 mL (2 cups) unsweetened orange juice and 4.5 L (18 cups) water.

Pre-game meals and snacks

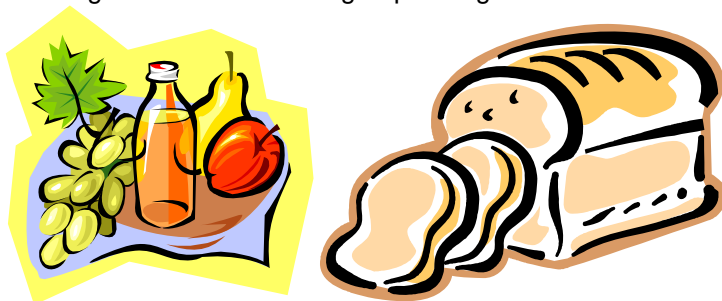
Start your game with a full tank of fuel or fully charged batteries to make sure that your mind and body are ready to go. Your walkman doesn't perform well when the batteries are low and neither do you. Your body needs time to digest the food before a game. Use the general guidelines shown below while remembering that the time needed depends on the person and the sport.

- ❖ Large meals should be eaten 3 or more hours before a game
- ❖ Allow 2-3 hours for a smaller meal
- ❖ A small snack or blender/liquid meal can be eaten 1-2 hours before a game

Food high in fat or protein (e.g. French fries, chips hamburger, hot dog, doughnut) takes longer for your body to digest than foods high in carbohydrates.

Tournaments

It takes 24-48 hours to refuel your muscles completely after intense exercise. If you have 2 or more games in a day, you need to refuel your muscles by choosing foods with carbohydrates. Try to eat these foods within the first 2 hours after your game when your muscles are ready to soak up the fuel. Aim for 1-1.5 g carbohydrate/kg body weight. (Divide your weight in pound by 2 to get a rough estimate of your weight in kg and use 1 g carbohydrate/estimated kg.) Foods from the Grain Products or Vegetables & Fruit food groups are good choices.



Examples of carbohydrate foods for between games:

- Slice of bread and a piece of fruit (30 g carbohydrate)
- 500 mL sports drink and a handful of carrot sticks (42 g carbohydrate)
- 2 rice cakes, a small yogourt, and a banana (50 g carbohydrate)
- Cereal or granola bar, a piece of fruit and a juice box (60 g carbohydrate)
- Juice box, 6 stoned wheat thins, and 1 cup grapes (80 g carbohydrate)

These types of food are often not available at fields, rinks or gyms so remember to bring healthy foods with you.

Mixed Bag

- Healthy bodies come in all shapes and sizes. During puberty, males and females normally gain weight before a growth spurt in height. This is not the time to diet.
- Most athletes do not need to supplement their diet if they are following the guidelines provided in this handout. For example, whey protein does not increase muscle mass unless your diet is low in protein. This is not the case for most Canadians. Steroid use is linked to many negative consequences including acne, premature balding, increased aggression and breast enlargement. Training, adequate rest and sleep, and a healthy diet are needed to build muscle mass and reach your peak level of performance.

For more information contact Dial A Dietitian at 604-732-9191 or 1-800-667-3438 or visit the SportMedBC (sport nutrition page) www.sportmedbc.com, Australian Institute of Sports Nutrition <http://www.ais.org.au/nutrition/index.asp>, the Canadian Health Network www.canadian-health-network.ca or Dietitians of Canada www.dietitians.ca websites

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