

Pre and Post Game Time Nutrition

Eating a balanced amount of carbohydrate, fat and protein is important to exercise, train and play sports at your best. Following Canada's Food Guide is a good first step to ensure you are getting the amount of carbohydrate, protein and fat you need.



Tips for Healthy Eating

Drink fluids, especially plain water, before, during and after the sports event. You can also get fluid from other sources such as white milk, unsweetened fortified plant-based beverages, whole vegetables and fruit, and soups.

Eat regular meals and snacks throughout the day. Choose familiar foods and avoid anything new on game day in case it causes an upset stomach.

Athletes may need more food to meet their energy demands on days they train or compete. These needs can often be met with prioritizing pre & post nutrition.



	Benefit	Healthy Tip
Vegetables and fruit	Energy for muscles and helps with concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoy fresh, frozen or canned vegetables and fruit
Whole grain foods	Energy for muscles and helps with concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose whole grain products when possible such as oatmeal, breads, wraps, crackers and brown rice
Protein foods	Energy, growth and repair of muscles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoy plant-based protein foods more often like nuts, seeds, nut butters, beans or lentils Enjoy other protein foods like eggs, fish, poultry, lean red meat, white milk, yogurt, and cheese Choose lean cuts of meat and trim off fat; remove skin from poultry

Pre-Exercise Nutrition

Eating a balanced meal 2-3 hours before exercise gives an athlete time to digest food and convert it to fuel. If its not possible to eat a meal 2-3 hours before, athletes can choose a snack 30 minutes - 1 hour before. Snacks should include carbohydrates for quick energy and low-moderate in protein to reduce cramping or stomach upset.

Snack Examples:

Whole grain crackers with cheese or hummus
Whole grain english muffin or slice of toast w/ peanut butter
Whole grain cerials + milk
Whole fruit (apple, banana, grapes, etc)
Canned fruit (in water)
Individual packages of unsweetened oatmeal
Granola bars (not chocolate or yogurt dipped)
Whole grain muffins
Plain popcorn or apple sauce

Post-Exercise Nutrition

After training or playing sports, your body is ready to store energy again, repair muscles and re-hydrate. This is why it is important to eat a balanced meal or snack after exercising intensely for more than an hour. It's Important to emphasize a balance of carbohydrates and protein foods, and replenish fluids at this stage.

Snack Examples:

Banana plus a cup of milk or yogurt
A smoothie made with fruit and yogurt
Turkey Sandwich on whole grain with fruit on the side
Crackers with peanut butter or cheese
Trail mix with dried fruit + milk
Smoothie w/ frozen berries and yogurt
Energy bites or granola bar

Fast Food Choices

For better nutrition choose..	Instead of...
Oatmeal with fruit, whole grain bagels/toast peanut butter, pancakes with fruit and yogurt	Donuts, croissants, breakfast sandwiches with processed meats like bacon, bologna, and sausage
Grilled chicken sandwiches, chicken pizza with veggies, wrap on whole grain pita or tortilla, hamburgers lettuce and tomato	Deep-fried chicken sandwiches, multiple patty burgers with sauce, pizza with salami, pepperoni or bacon, hot dogs
Plain water, white milk or unsweetened fortified plant-based beverages such as soy or almond milk	Pop, juice, chocolate milk, sports or energy drinks, sweetened hot and cold drinks (e.g., cappuccinos, fruit punches, flavoured water)
Salad, baked potato, chili, soup	French fries and onion rings
Yogurt parfaits	Sundaes, pies, cakes, cookies

There are many dietitians that specialize in sports nutrition. They can work with you to set personalized targets for carbohydrate, fat and protein intake before, during and after training or playing your sport.

Questions? Contact Eat Great and Participate's Registered Dietitian at mpark@recreationnl.com or (709) 729-4490.

Eat Great and Participate: recreationnl.com/eat-great-participate

Canada's Food Guide: Canada.ca/FoodGuide