



Fuelling Your Best Sports/Exercise Performance

Whatever your exercise goals-weight loss, fitness, performance etc. **your result is 20% down to your activity and 80% down to your nutrition.** Sports nutrition doesn't have to be complicated. If you want to get the most from your exercise the following is for you.

Eat a Balanced Diet Each Day

To exercise consistently, you need to provide a good supply of high-quality energy to your muscles. The easiest way to do this is to eat a balanced breakfast and continue eating a variety of high-quality foods throughout the day. Think quality over quantity. Carbohydrate in the form of glycogen is the fuel that makes exercise possible, **However**, avoid simple sugars and processed, refined foods and focus on slow release energy foods such as lean protein eaten together with complex carbs and good fats.

2-4 Hours Before You Workout

The pre-exercise meal will vary depending upon your exercise style. If you workout in the evening, lunch should include lean protein and easily digestible foods high in complex carbohydrates, such as wholegrain pasta, rice or bread, and colourful vegetables.

If you exercise first thing in the morning, you'll probably feel best if you eat a light breakfast such as a healthy protein based smoothie.

Sixty Minutes Before You Workout

Depending upon the type and duration of workout you do, you'll want to eat a small snack again of carbohydrate, a little good fat and protein and drink some water.

During Your Workout Hydration during exercise is key. A 1% drop in hydration can negatively affect performance. The amount needed varies based on exercise intensity, duration and even the weather. To simplify things aim to drink 250ml every 30 min during exercise. If exercising longer than 90 minutes, consider a hydration supplement that replenishes electrolytes BUT without sugar. Exercising for more than about 90 minutes usually requires that you replenish lost carbohydrates. Practically this may mean a sports drink ideally with carbohydrate and some protein mixed in to protect your muscle mass.

After Your Workout

After your workout, the general rule is simple: drink enough water to replace water lost through sweat. The best way to determine this is by weighing yourself before and after exercise. For every pound of body weight lost, you'll need to consume about 500ml of fluid. Another way to determine how much liquid to consume is to check the color of your urine. Dark, concentrated (smellier), urine may indicate dehydration (hence the smell around the gents toilets-sorry guys)! Your urine should be relatively clear.

Eating After Your Workout

Your 'refuel' needs to be within 30 minutes of your workout. This is known as the metabolic window. Research shows that getting a balanced source of complex carbohydrates and around 15-25 grams of protein (depending on the type of activity) in this window, re balances your glycogen stores, blood sugar AND prolongs fat burn. Although solid foods can work, a recovery shake is much easier to digest, have available and if the quality of protein and carbs is correct will get to your muscles fast and repair & build even quicker. If you have done endurance exercise a higher ratio of carbs to protein will be necessary