**Nutrition 101: What do parents want to know about fueling for performance?**

Since parents are normally responsible for the food that swimmers eat, it's important that they have good nutritional information.

**What should my child eat before meets and practices?**

The best pre-meet (and pre-practice) meal should contain mostly carbohydrates. Carbohydrate-rich foods like pasta, breads and cereal are easy for athletes to digest and absorb. A handy rule of thumb: One to four hours before exercise, consume 0.5 to 2.0 grams of carbohydrate per pound of body weight.

**Should my child eat before morning practice?**

 It's crucial for swimmers to eat before morning practice. Remind swimmers of the analogy of the empty gas tank. If they haven't eaten since the previous evening, the gas tank is empty and there is no fuel to produce energy for competition or training. for more information click this [LINK](http://www.usaswimming.org/ViewNewsArticle.aspx?TabId=0&itemid=5530&mid=8712).

**What should my child eat after practice?**

 It's important to consume some carbohydrate fuel for recovery immediately after workout rather than waiting until the next full meal. The meals that provide 100 grams of carbohydrate are a good starting point. Here are a few examples of meals that provide 100 grams of carbohydrates:

 • 1 bagel with peanut butter and 2/3 cup of raisins

• 1 cup of low-fat yogurt, 1 banana and 1 cup of orange juice

• 1 turkey sandwich with 1 cup of applesauce

• 8 oz. of skim milk, 1 apple, 1 orange, 2 slices of bread and 3 pancakes

• 1 serving of sports drink and 1 bagel

**What do parents and swimmers need to know about energy drinks?**

• Advertisements, images and slogans convince consumers to buy the product.

• Most energy drinks contain ingredients that are not strictly regulated, have little or no nutritional value, and can be potentially harmful.

• The amount of caffeine and other stimulants in energy drinks can also be a cause for alarm.

The best piece of advice is this: the energy needed to sustain long training schedules and other daily activities **is not going to be found in a can, a bar or a bottle**. There's only one reliable way to maximize peak performance: evaluate and modify your dietary intake to make sure you're meeting your body's nutritional requirements and level of energy output.

**Nutrition 101: What is a dietary supplement?**

A dietary supplement is defined as a product that:

•         Is intended to supplement the diet

•         Contains one or more dietary ingredients

•         Is intended to be taken by mouth

•         Is labeled on the front panel as a “dietary supplement.”

**What is USA Swimming's position on supplements?**

Along with the US Anti-Doping Agency® (USADA), USA Swimming considers dietary supplements “take at your own risk.”

Dietary supplements are a special **category of food**and are technically regulated by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). However, the FDA **does not strictly regulate ingredients or claims**regarding the effectiveness of dietary supplements. They may contain harmful or illegal ingredients or they may just be ineffective.

**Should athletes take vitamins?**

Many athletes take a vitamin or mineral supplement “just in case” their diets are inadequate. In most cases this is highly unnecessary.

**Dos and Don'ts**

•         DO eat a variety of foods from all of the food groups.

•         DO eat these foods in sufficient quantities to support the caloric demands of training and recovery.

•         DON'T turn to supplements for a quick fix.

**What resources are available for athletes?**

**U.S. Anti-Doping Agency**

www.USADA.orgThe U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) is the national anti-doping organization in the United States.

 Athletes, parents, coaches or medical professionals may check the status of medications (over the counter and prescription) at www.GlobalDRO.com. If a medication is not listed, or if questions arise, call USADA's Athlete Express at 719-785-2000.

**True Sport™**www.TrueSport.orgTrue Sport, powered by the USADA, equips parents, coaches, and youth to uphold sportsmanship and the positive ethical life lessons that sports teach.

 **Supplement 411**

www.supplement411.org

Supplement 411 aims to provide information, resources, and tips for navigating the issues and minimizing the risks associated with the dietary supplement market.