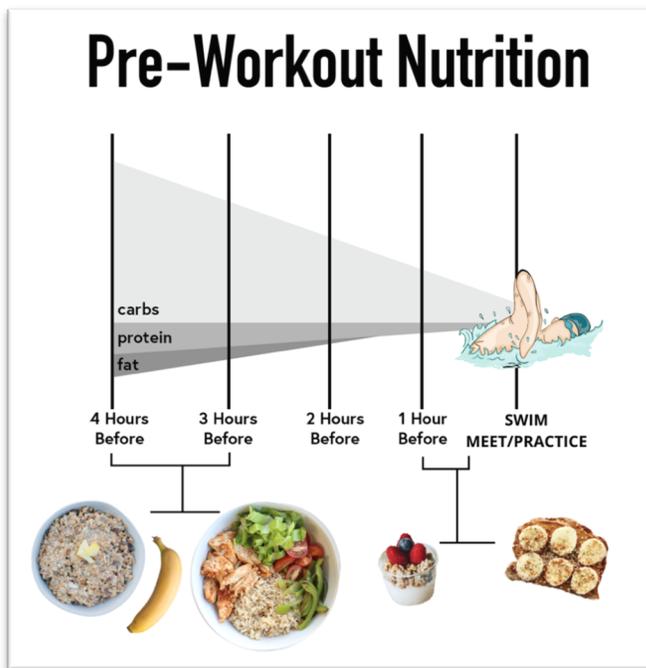


# Nutrition for Swimmers

**Food is fuel for the athlete and it can either help or hinder athletic performance greatly.** It's important to understand the types of foods that should be consumed in the hours leading up to a swim practice or meet to maximize performance. It's also important that the athlete learn through trial and error during training sessions which foods and fluids work best for them personally, as no single meal or snack is perfect for everyone.

A **general guideline** is to aim for a snack containing 100-300 calories within 60 minutes leading up to your event, or eating a balanced meal (*closer to 600 calories*) about 3 hours prior to your event. The **goal of pre-workout nutrition is to enhance performance without** causing stomach or GI distress. Fueling your body pre-workout with whole food sources such as complex carbohydrates and lean protein can help to maintain normal blood sugar levels, prevent hunger, and provide enough energy to fuel your muscles.

For larger meals, allow 3-4 hours to digest. For smaller meals, allow 1-2 hours. For small snacks or liquids such as smoothies, allow up to 1 hour.



Your meal 3-4 hours before a meet, practice, or hard training session should consist of all three macronutrients (carbohydrate, protein and fat). As your meet or training session approaches, **the foods you eat should consist mainly of complex carbohydrates and lean protein**, while containing very **minimal fat**.

**Carbohydrates are the primary source of fuel for your muscles**, regardless of the type of activity you're performing. A diet low in carbohydrates leads to early fatigue, decreased endurance, power, and mental focus. Too much fat or fiber immediately before your workout can lead to GI distress such as bloating, gas, and stomach cramping. If limited on time before an early morning workout, an easy convenient last minute could be a slice of whole grain bread with banana, a spoonful of peanut butter, and honey drizzled on top.

## PRE-WORKOUT MEAL IDEAS (3-4 HRS BEFORE)

### Breakfast

- Oatmeal (with dried fruit & nuts) + banana
- Omelet (*eggs, peppers, onions, tomatoes*) + 2 slices whole grain bread or potatoes + fresh fruit
- Whole grain bagel with peanut butter + banana + glass of milk or small cup of yogurt

### Lunch/Dinner

- Grilled/baked chicken, turkey, or fish + Mixed green salad or steamed veggies + a large potato, quinoa, rice **or** whole grain pasta with a drizzle of olive oil, salt, & parmesan cheese
- Turkey or chicken wrap/sandwich with avocado, cucumber, spinach, tomato (any veggies) + fresh fruit cup + side raw veggies/crackers with hummus

## PRE-WORKOUT / MID-MEET SNACK IDEAS (30-60 MINS BEFORE OR BETWEEN SESSIONS)

- Slice (or two) of whole grain bread with peanut butter, sliced bananas, and honey on top
- ½ cup Greek yogurt with granola, honey & berries
- ½ (or whole) bagel with peanut butter & mashed strawberries
- Energy bar (GoMacro, Perfect Bar, Clif, Larabar)
- Piece of fruit and handful of pretzels or crackers
- Half a peanut butter & jelly sandwich

When consumed pre-workout, **beetroot juice** has been shown to improve both endurance and intensity, along with shorter recovery times between training sessions.

