**Nutrition Tips for Swimmers**

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Choosing nutritious foods is important for good health & optimal **athletic performance.** Your body’s energy/fuel comes from what you eat. Eating three meals plus snacks each day is recommended. It is very important to fuel your body before & refuel your body after swimming. **Planning ahead is the key.**

The three basic nutrients are:

**Carbohydrate:** The body’s preferred fuel source, *especially during exercise*. Foods that provide carbohydrates are breads, bagels, cereal, pasta, rice, potatoes, beans, corn, yogurt, flavored milk, and fruits.

**Protein:** Builds and maintains muscle mass and aids in muscle recovery. Milk, yogurt, cheese, nuts, peanut butter, seeds, soy, eggs, chicken, pork, fish, and beef are all good protein sources.

**Fat:** Needed for every cell in the body and is a source of energy during low-intensity activity and long duration activity. Sources of healthy fat include vegetable oils and nuts.

**Meal Ideas:**

**Breakfast**

Cereal with sliced bananas and milk, toast with peanut butter, and orange juice

***OR***

Pancakes with margarine & syrup, strawberries, and chocolate milk.

**Lunch**

Ham sandwich on wheat bread, pretzels, apple, animal cookies, and chocolate milk.

***OR***

Bagel with peanut butter, string cheese, carrot sticks & ranch, baked chips, oatmeal cookie, and 100% juice.

**Dinner**

Spaghetti with meat sauce, bread sticks, salad, apple sauce and milk.

***OR***

Chicken tacos with cheese, lettuce and tomato and a strawberry smoothie.

*Healthy* dessert options are: pudding, frozen yogurt, light ice cream, sorbet, sherbet, oatmeal or peanut butter cookie, rice krispy bar, smoothie, fudgesicle, homemade fruit or pumpkin muffins.

**High performance snack ideas:**

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| Yogurt and granola | String cheese and baked crackers |
| Bagel and peanut butter | Fig Newtons |
| Trail mix, peanuts, almonds, etc | Tortilla with cheese |
| Cup of soup | Smoothies |
| Bananas, apples, grapes, oranges, applesauce, 100% fruit sticks | Low-fat popcorn |
| Flavored milk | Energy bars |
| Pretzels | Goldfish |
| Graham crackers | Veggies and dip |

**For swimmers the amount of time between events will determine the amount and type of food to eat.**

**1 hour or less** - sports drink, fruit, bagel, granola/energy bar, graham crackers

**1-3 hours** (combine carbohydrate with protein) Sandwich, peanut butter and crackers, string cheese with crackers and 100% juice, yogurt and granola, cup of soup with handful of trail mix, smoothie, bagel with peanut butter, pretzel with cheese and fruit.

**\*\*Make sure water and sports drinks are always available.** Sports drinks like Gatorade or PowerAde are designed for optimal fluid replacement.

\*\***Recovery nutrition:** within 30-45 minutes after hard work out-combine carbohydrate + protein (chocolate milk or yogurt)

**NOTE:** ***Do not*** drink soda pop, energy drinks, or fruit drinks (Hi-C, Sunny Delight, etc.) as the high sugar content can cause stomach cramps and hurt performance.

\*\*Large Costco muffins are loaded with calories (600-700) and

fat (32-38 grams)and are ***not a healthy choice*** for competition.

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