

Piranhas Nutrition Document 2019-2020

Please use this as a guide and remember that everyone has their own unique digestive system, and it is important to learn what is best for each swimmer. It is important to eat healthy on a regular basis. Properly fueling your body results in a better overall performance in practice and in meets.

Pre-Training Nutrition

The pre-training meal or snack depends on the time before training, personal preferences, and food tolerance. The meal or snack should consist mostly of carbohydrates and some protein. Carbohydrates and proteins fuel the muscles to allow the body to train harder and to have more energy which leads to a better workout. The more time you have before training, the more protein swimmers can have in their meal and snacks.

Here are some examples of pre-training meals/snacks:

2 hours before training: Toast and boiled eggs or a rice bowl with lean meat and veggies.

1 hour before training: Oatmeal with fruit or nut butter, granola with low-fat yogurt, or toast with a small amount of peanut butter and jelly, or a smoothie that contains fruit and yogurt.

30 minutes before training: Light carbohydrates such as a banana, granola bar, or raisin bread are recommended due to the lack of time needed to digest the food.

It should be noted that it is important to stay hydrated before, during, and after practice to prevent dehydration.

Post Training Nutrition

It is important to eat as soon as possible after the training session to start the body's recovery process. The recommended post-recovery snack should be eaten within the first 30 minutes after the training. If missed, the body has a lower ability to repair and recover the muscles. The snack should consist of mostly carbohydrates (40-80g) and some protein (10-20g). Coach Kirk advises swimmers to be cautious of the carbohydrates consumed, they should be mostly complex carbs, not sugar. The snack also should be low in fat, this allows for the muscles to refuel faster.

Here are some examples of good post training snacks:

- Low-fat cheese and crackers with fruit
- Sports recovery bar (High in carbohydrates, some protein, and low sugar content)
- Peanut butter and jelly sandwich

- Honey sandwich with 2 boiled eggs
- Granola bar with one cup of low-fat Greek yogurt

*Fluids: Low-fat chocolate milk and smoothies

Common Detrimental Mindsets on Nutrition

The first common swimmer mindset is thinking that because they swim all the time, they should be able to eat whatever they want. Even though swimmers are burning off the calories, if they are not consuming the necessary nutrients needed, it will affect their trainings and will make them feel sluggish and slow.

The second common swimmer mindset is because they put in a lot of effort during training, they should not eat too much or much less than they should. Swimmers should consume the necessary amount and nutrients needed to refuel their muscles. The proper nutrition is needed for swimmers to reach their full potential.

What Should Swimmers Eat?

Experts recommend 4-7 meals a day for swimmers who are training for more than two hours daily. It is important to note that eating large meals or eating too much at once will leave the swimmer feeling sluggish and slow. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recommends 0.5-0.7 grams of carbohydrates should be consumed daily for every pound of body weight. This should also be coupled with 20 to 40 grams of protein. Protein rebuilds, repairs, and wards off soreness after trainings. Protein also supports and boost the immune system and helps ward off hunger during trainings. Some examples of foods that contain proteins are lean meats, eggs, fish, and low-fat dairy.

For a swimmer's diet, the meals should consist of foods that are easy to digest. One half of the swimmer's meal should contain carbohydrates. Carbohydrates are stored as glycogen in the muscles and liver to fuel the body throughout the day and during trainings. This means that after a training, the body's energy source will be decreased and will need to be replaced. Sources of carbohydrates include rice, pasta, cereal, potatoes, lentils, beans, and peas. The other half of the swimmer's meal should contain proteins and healthy fats. This includes olive oil, nuts, avocados, seeds, vegetables, fruit, whole grains, vitamins, and minerals.

It is also important that swimmers remain hydrated throughout the day and during training to replace electrolytes, minerals, and water lost. Swimmers sweat in the water during training, so having a water bottle on hand is important to combat dehydration. The main minerals lost are sodium and potassium. It is noted that most athletes consume enough sodium in a normal diet, you can sprinkle glucose and some salt into beverages for absorption and replenishment.

What to Eat the Day before a Meet

It is recommended that swimmers consume foods that are high in complex carbs and to drink fluids often.

Here are some examples of foods that contain complex carbs:

- Oatmeal
- Sweet potatoes or white potatoes that include the skin
- Grapefruit
- Bananas
- Blueberries
- Brown rice
- 100% whole wheat bread and pasta
- Cantaloupe

What to Eat for Breakfast before Practice or Meet

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, it kick-starts swimmer's metabolism and helps their body to maximize their performance and trainings. Even if the swimmer is too nervous or excited to eat, it is important to eat something, even if it is something small. Swimmer's should eat something easily digestible and light such as cereal, banana, oatmeal, fresh fruit, or yogurt. If the swimmer is not hungry, a liquid meal such as a smoothie, or milk tetra packs are recommended.

What to Eat before a Practice or Meet

It is recommended for swimmers to eat a meal that is high in carbohydrates two to four hours before a practice or a meet. This meal should be low in fiber and fat. This includes whole grain cereal with milk and fresh fruit or oatmeal with banana or cinnamon.

One to two hours before a practice or meet, swimmers should consume a light snack such as a sports bar or fresh fruit.

Snacks to Eat Between Races

As soon as the swimmer is finished with their event they should eat as soon as possible to aid in the recovery of their muscles. The snacks could consist of complex carbs and proteins, not high fat or simple sugars. Some examples include:

- Pasta salad
- Unsalted nuts
- Plain sandwich

- Grapes
- Apples
- Dried fruits
- Cereal bars

What to Eat After Meets and Trainings

Meals or snacks eaten after training or meets should contain carbohydrates and proteins for muscle repair and growth. It is also recommended that swimmers drink water to stay continuously hydrated. The suggested food for carbohydrate consumption is yogurt with fruit, fruit smoothies, fresh fruit, toast with jelly or peanut butter with bananas. The suggested foods for protein consumption is tuna salad, eggs, sandwich with white meat, chocolate milk, edamame, smoothie, omelets, whole wheat pita with hummus, or fried eggs on toast.

What to Eat During a Meet

It is important for swimmers to eat and drink between events to aid in recovery and to stay hydrated. If the swimmer has one to two hours between events, they can consume the following recommended foods to refuel their muscles:

- Sports gel
- Nut butter
- Rice cakes
- Pasta without sauce or cheese

If the swimmer has less than one hour between events, it is recommended that the snacks be light and easy to digest. Some examples of foods are juice, yogurt pouches, and small pieces of fresh fruit.