

# FUN FOOD FACTS

## RECOVERY FOOD

Recovery Tip includes specific suggestions for post-workout/post-race snacks. Keep these points in mind:

Bring your post-workout or post-race snack to the pool. If you have a long drive home after training, eat in the car and then have a decent meal when you get home. If you live close to the pool, you should have it ready right after practice to eat on the way home or as soon as you walk in the door.

If you're at prelims, eat at least half of your post-race snack before getting in the water for warm-down. Eat the other half, plus another snack when you finish warming down. Solid foods are great, but liquid nutrition (ex. Instant Breakfast, homemade smoothies) may be more tolerable and easier to incorporate into a warm-down. Individual preference will also play a role, but the end result will be positive.

**Eat ONE of the following immediately after workout or racing, then another item an hour later:**

Your post-workout/race carb intake should be 65-85 grams.  
Food Suggestions:

- 2 cups apple juice or cranberry cocktail
- 2 servings of low-fat yogurt
- 1 cup dried apricots
- 1.5 PBJ sandwich
- PowerBars®
- Gatorade®\* OR Powerade®
- 2 cans Carnation Instant Breakfast™
- 1.5 cans Boost® or Ensure™
- 2/3 cup raisins
- 1 bagel with peanut butter
- 4 cups grapefruit juice or orange juice

# FLUID FUEL FOR ATHLETES

From Elizabeth Quinn, Your Guide to Sports Medicine @ [www.sportsmedicine.com](http://www.sportsmedicine.com)

Proper hydration is extremely important during exercise. Adequate fluid intake for athletes, even the recreational kind, is essential to comfort, performance and even safety. The longer and more intensely you exercise, the more important it is to drink plenty of fluids. Inadequate water consumption can be physically harmful. Consider that a loss of as little as 2% of one's body weight due to sweating, can lead to a drop in blood volume. When this occurs, the heart works harder in order to move blood through the bloodstream. Pre-hydration and re-hydration are vital to maintaining cardiovascular health, proper body temperature and muscle function.

Dehydration is a major cause of fatigue, poor performance, decreased coordination and muscle cramping. To avoid the above, the American College Of Sports Medicine suggests the following:

1. Eat a high carbohydrate, low fat diet & drink plenty of fluids between exercise sessions.  
(Plain water or fluids WITHOUT sugar or caffeine are the best).
2. Drink 17 oz (2+ Cups) of fluid 2 hours before exercise.
3. Drink every 15 minutes during exercise.
4. Keep drinks cooler than air temperature & close at hand (a water bottle is ideal).
5. If you exercise for more than 60 minutes, you may benefit from a sports drink containing carbohydrate (not greater than 8% concentration, though).
6. Take 30-60 grams of carbohydrate per hour to delay fatigue & fuel muscle contractions.
7. Inclusion of sodium (0.5-0.7 g.1(-1) of water)ingested during exercise lasting longer than an hour may enhance palatability, and therefore encourage athletes to drink enough.

Although athletes are more prone to suffer symptoms of dehydration, all exercisers can increase performance & delay fatigue or muscle pain by staying properly hydrated. Consider 'pre-hydrating' by drinking 12-16 ounces of water 1-2 hours before exercising.

## How much is enough?

To get an idea of just how much you need to drink, you should start weighing yourself before and after your workouts. Any weight decrease is probably due to water loss (sorry, but you didn't just lose 2 pounds of body fat). If you have lost 2

or more pounds during your workout you should drink 24 ounces of water for each pound lost.

Another way to determine your state of hydration is by monitoring your morning and pre-exercise heart rate. Over the course of a few weeks, you will see a pattern. This information can be extremely helpful in determining your state of recovery. Days when your heart rate is elevated above your norm may indicate a lack of complete recovery, possibly due to dehydration.

## **What about Sports Drinks?**

Sports drinks can be helpful to athletes who are exercising at a high intensity for 90 minutes or more, fluids supplying 60 to 100 calories per 8 ounces helps to supply the needed calories required for continuous performance. It's really not necessary to replace losses of sodium, potassium and other electrolytes during exercise since you're unlikely to deplete your body's stores of these minerals during normal training. If, however, you find yourself exercising in extreme conditions over 5 or 6 hours (an Ironman or ultramarathon, for example) you will want to add a complex sports drink with electrolytes. Athletes who don't consume electrolytes under these conditions risk over-hydration, believe it or not. The most likely occurrence is found in the longer events (five hours or more) when athletes drink excessive amounts of electrolyte free water, and develop (low blood sodium concentration).

## **What about Caffeine?**

While caffeine may have some ergogenic properties, remember that it acts as a diuretic causing your body to excrete fluid instead of retaining it, so it is not the wisest choice when trying to hydrate. You're better off with plain water or fruit juice until your weight reaches that of your pre-exercise state.

# EAT COLORFUL FOOD

One of the most overlooked sources of carbohydrate is fruit. Yes, FRUIT. Fresh, canned, frozen, dried or juiced. No matter how you look at it, fruit is an excellent source of carbohydrate. Not only does fruit provide carbohydrate in the form of natural sugars (versus refined sugar), the bright colors of fruits indicate that they are also excellent sources of vitamins and minerals, including a sub-group called anti-oxidants.

One of the side effects of exercise is the generation of “free radicals.” Free radicals are molecules that can actually cause damage to muscle tissue above and beyond the damage caused by exercise. The damage caused by exercise is normal. It serves as part of the stimulus for training adaptation to take place. But damage caused by free radicals is NOT a desired part of the training process. Damage caused by free radicals (aka “scavengers”) circulating in the bloodstream after workout can continue well into the recovery period. This is when the body is supposed to be adapting!

Anti-oxidants “absorb” free radicals, neutralizing their effect in the body before their damage to muscle tissue can amount to much. A diet consistently rich in fruits (and other colorful foods, such as VEGETABLES) is apt to keep the body consistently supplied with anti-oxidants, which will assist the body in keeping free radical formation to a minimum. This a good reason to eat lots of colorful foods during the recovery time between workouts.

**Colorful foods include, but are not limited to:** Apples, Strawberries, Blueberries, Bananas, Oranges, Kiwi, Watermelon, Raspberries, Grapes, Mango, Papaya, Apricots, Red peppers, Broccoli, Corn, Squash, Carrots, Peas, Green beans, Tomatoes.

**Colourful foods DO NOT include:** Skittles, Jelly Beans, M&Ms, Fruit Loops, etc.

# FOOD VARIETY

Have you taken a look at your Food Guide lately? Despite talk of revising the guide to improve its effectiveness, there remains a very simple but important reason why the foods are divided into groups, variety. Yes, variety! The food groups are divided into the categories you see because the foods within a group bring something to the table that the foods in the other groups cannot. We're talking about vitamins and mineral here.

Consider the Vegetable group. The foods in this group tend to be very high in Vitamins A, C and E. Now consider the Milk products group. While the foods in the group may contain some Vitamin A, C or E, they are not good sources of these vitamins. However, they are good source of calcium, something the foods in the Vegetable group might contain, but only some of the foods and only in small quantities. When a food group is eliminated, the vitamins and minerals that group provides are eliminated from the diet.

The point is that in order for swimmers to obtain a complete set of vitamins and minerals, they need to eat a variety of foods from ALL four food groups. There are no magic foods or food groups. The magic is VARIETY!

## *Suggested Serving Sizes Per Day!!!!*

- Grain Products: 5-12
- Vegetables & Fruits: 5-10
- Milk Products: 3-4
- Meat and Alternatives: 2-3

## Packing for Meets

Given the hectic pace of meet day, swimmers should have a variety of food items to select from. Send them to the pool with a cooler of goods. Use the following suggestions to get you started:

### **Foods:**

- Dry cereal (ex: Frosted Mini Wheats, Honey Nut Shredded Wheat)
- PBJ sandwich halves
- Granola bars
- Power Bars
- 100% Juice boxes
- Whole fruits (ex: orange, peach, nectarine)
- Container of berries (ex: strawberries, raspberries, blackberries)
- Yogurt w/ side of grapenuts cereal for mixing
- Individual packets of oatmeal

- Trail mix (nuts, raisins, dried cranberries, mini pretzels, chocolate chips or M&Ms)
- Water
- Electrolyte drink (ex: Gatorade)

## **Tips:**

- Pack things in small servings.
- Think finger food.
- Include an ice pack.
- Include enough variety for selection based on on-the-spot preference.
- Include things you know they like and are likely to eat.
- Avoid things you know they won't eat.
- Provide utensils.
- Avoid items that require cutting (cut it at home!).
- Don't require them to bring to cooler home empty, see what they eat and don't eat.