

Top Nutrition Trends for 2013

What's hot in the food and nutrition world for 2013? Seems like everyone has a list of trends for the New Year, but here are some I've culled from various sources that will enhance a swimmer's performance:

1. Muscle and protein. Research on protein and the timing of eating protein-rich foods continues to be a hot topic. Younger people are looking for energy, toned muscles and staying in tip top shape, while older folks (like your parents and grandparents) are interested in maintaining muscle as they age. Including protein at every meal and snack is the way to go and the food industry is adding protein to a variety of products to make it easy to get the muscle-building nutrient. Look for protein in granola bars, cereals, smoothies, and even extra protein added to milk, but don't overlook the obvious sources of protein: an egg for breakfast, a slice of cheese melted on toast, a chicken drumstick, tofu noodle bowl, and cereal and milk all contain high quality protein.
2. Snacking and mini-meals. Small bites will continue as trend in 2013 with many quick service restaurants adding snack options for a quick bite. Swimmers should embrace this trend by keeping snacks on hand for pool-side munching or post-workout recovery at the ready. Freeze a bottle of sports drink or fruit juice and throw it in your back pack to keep string cheese, a turkey sandwich, or yogurt cold for a post-workout snack. Learn to make your own granola or trail mix to keep you fueled. My favorite is Food Network's Ellie Krieger's nutty granola mixed into plain Greek yogurt for a protein-boosting, tasty breakfast or snack (You can find the recipe for the granola at <http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ellie-krieger/nutty-granola-recipe/index.html>)
3. Whole grains in meals for kids. Whole grains are showing up in every carbohydrate-rich food from spaghetti noodles to the sandwich bun on your burger and for good reason. Whole grains contain all the healthy parts of the grain so that means more fiber and more nutrients that are lost when whole grains are processed into white flour. Swimmers need carbohydrates to fuel the demands of long-training and competition so start to sneak in more whole grains by choosing breads, cereals, waffles, pancakes, muffins, and even the burger bun made with whole grains.
4. Breakfast. You know breakfast is the most important meal of day so jump on this trend. Most swimmers have early morning practice and hitting the water without hitting breakfast can mean running out of energy to finish your workout. Yogurt, a toasted whole grain English muffin with peanut or almond butter, or a cereal bar can give you the energy needed to push through practice. If the drive through is the best you can manage, look for new offerings like yogurt parfaits or egg white breakfast sandwiches instead of greasy chicken or sausage biscuits.

Chris Rosenbloom is the sports dietitian for Georgia State University Athletics and is the editor of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Sports Nutrition Manual, 5th edition, 2012. She welcomes questions from swimmers, parents and coaches. Email her at chrisrosenbloom@gmail.com.

