



Sport Nutrition Products

There are many sports nutrition products on the market and it is quite confusing at times to make a good choice based on your nutrition needs for your training cycle and body weight goals. Below is a description of the three main sports nutrition products.

Sports Drinks

Sports drinks are flavored beverages that contain measured amounts of carbohydrate and electrolytes and are typically consumed before, during and after training sessions. They will help maintain hydration and carbohydrate replacement for optimal performance. Look for a product that supplies the following per 8 ounces: 14-15 grams carbohydrate and at least 100 mg sodium. Drink about 15-20 oz of sports drink 1-2 hours before training, 6-12oz of sports drink every 15-20 minutes during training >1 hour and 24 oz of sports drink after training for every pound of body weight lost.

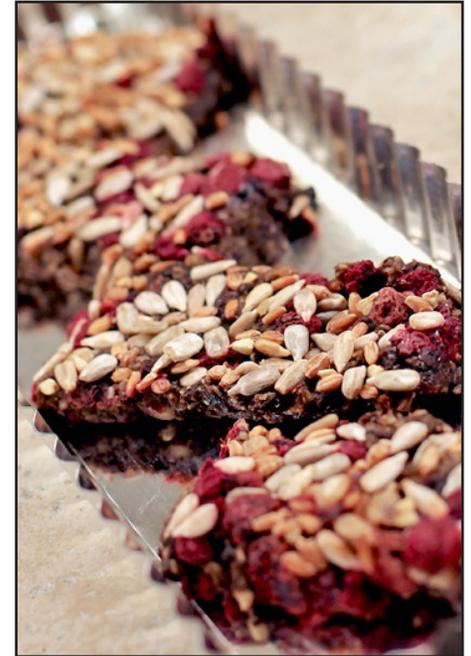
Sports Bars

Energy bars are designed to provide athletes a compact source of calories, carbohydrate and protein before, during or after training sessions when other solid foods are not well-tolerated or available. Although the size and composition of these energy bars varies, it is typically best to consume one that contains 30-100 grams of carbohydrate and 6-20 grams of protein. If used before training, eat a bar that is higher in carbohydrate (60-100 grams), moderate in protein (10-15 grams) and low in fat (<6 grams) 3-4 hours before and a bar that is lower in carbohydrate (30-40 grams), protein (<8 grams) and fat (<3 grams) 1-2 hours before. The higher carbohydrate and protein bars are appropriate after exercise.

Sports Gels

Energy gels are semi-solid forms of mostly carbohydrate that help to maintain blood sugar levels during training and competition. Most energy gels will contain at least 22 grams of carbohydrate and sometimes vitamins and minerals. If used during exercise, consume 1-2 gels per hour with 4-8 ounces of water for each gel eaten.

Refer to a qualified Sport Dietitian (RD: Registered Dietitian; CSSD: Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics) for more information about choosing a product and deciding on a timing protocol that is best for your needs.



INFORMATION

Athletes should rely mostly on real food to supply their energy needs throughout the day.

Sports nutrition products such as sports drinks, sports bars and gels have been designed to supplement an athlete's eating program before, during, and after training and not be a replacement or a substitute for food.

This material was developed by professional sports nutritionists at the United States Olympic Committee. For more information and additional sport performance resources, visit:

www.teamusa.org/resources/usoc-sport-performance