

DIFFERENT TYPES OF FOODS



Carbohydrates: Foods that work the quickest to provide fuel for muscle (glycogen). Carbohydrates are the primary source of energy during exercise. Examples: whole grain bread, brown rice, oatmeal, corn tortillas, quinoa, whole grain pasta. Whole grain/complex carbohydrates are best. Simple carbohydrates like sugar, white rice, and potatoes cause a rapid spike then fall in blood sugar, which may make you feel depleted.



Proteins: Foods that help promote cell growth and repair. Muscles need protein to grow! Examples: eggs, fish, chicken, turkey, beef, cheese, beans



Fats: Foods that help transport a variety of important nutrients like Vitamin A and D. They are a major component of every cell in our body. Fats are used as a slow secondary energy. Examples: butter, olive oil, nuts, seeds, nut butters, avocados

FUELING YOUR BODY

- Coming to a practice, game or scrimmage without having eaten anything will leave you without the energy or concentration to play at your full potential
 - Quick decision making becomes slower when you don't have the proper fuel → leading to poor performance and higher injury risk
- Glycogen is stored in muscle to provide your fuel to move.
 - Your body can only store a limited amount of glycogen, so refueling is a must!
 - Low glycogen stores → lead to slower, weaker movements and, less ability to concentrate
 - Glycogen comes from food we eat (mostly carbohydrates)
 - Refueling your body at halftime may be ideal for some players (those who feel hungry or less energized)
- Eating shortly after practice or a game (within 30 minutes) is shown to replace glycogen fuels the fastest, so eat healthy carbohydrate and protein containing snacks and/or beverages as soon as you can after you finish

SPECIFIC FOOD QUESTIONS

What about protein/energy bars?

- There are many different types of bars out there. They can have high amounts of carbohydrates, protein and/or sugar. Although bars can be convenient, they don't have any magical ingredients that will increase athletic performance. Eating real food that contains both protein and carbohydrates (for example : cheese and crackers, yogurt, whole grain bread and peanut butter) can provide the same amount of fuel, but the benefit is that they also have water in them (where bars do not) to assist in digestion.

What about pasta?

- Pasta has been known as a great pre-event meal, as it contains lots of carbohydrates. Pasta can play a role in pre-event and/or post event meals, when done correctly. Pasta can be digested with minimal stomach distress (due to the low fiber content). A moderate serving of *whole grain* pasta with other nutrient dense foods (like proteins and vegetables) will allow athletes to maximize their nutrient intake. Taking in an excess of carbs (carb loading) the week before a big competition is common in endurance sports, but is not very beneficial in soccer.

Time Before Practice/Game	FOOD	DRINK***
2-3 hours before	Pre-game meal -carbohydrates -vegetable -protein <i>Don't stuff yourself</i>	~.5 – 1 liter of fluids
1-2 hours before	Pre-game snack (optional) -very light	
0-1 hour before	No food	
Event time	Easy to digest food (optional) -Juicy fruit with high water content (oranges, berries) -Pretzels -Graham crackers	~.5 – 1 liter of fluids
0-1 hour after	Post-game snack -Carbohydrates (~100 g) -Protein -Chocolate milk is a convenient and delicious way to incorporate carbohydrates and protein in one form of fuel	~2 liters over several hours

GOOD SNACKS/MEALS	BAD SNACKS/MEALS
Oatmeal	Dried fruit
Whole grain toast or bagel with peanut butter	Deep fill sandwiches on white bread
Eggs	Fruit chews
Yogurt and granola	Chocolates
Rice and beans	Sugary cereals
Cheese and crackers	Chips
Chocolate milk	Fast food
Trail mix	
Apple and peanut butter	

***dependent on weight, age, temperature, humidity, intensity of game/practice