

FUEL UP FOR RECOVERY

After exercise and competition you need to replenish fluid and fuel stores. This is particularly important so that you are prepared for your next event or training session.

Consume a carbohydrate rich drink or snack soon after exercise or your event, particularly if there is a short recovery time between sessions.

Protein is also an important part of your post exercise snack – to help recovery.

Continue to drink regularly to make sure fluid is replenished.

Examples of food containing carbohydrate and protein:

- Lean ham/chicken/tuna sandwich.
- Eggs on toast.
- Baked potato with baked beans and cottage cheese.
- Fresh or tinned fruit with low fat yoghurt.
- Sports or low fat milk drink, fruit or cereal bar.
- Breakfast cereal with skim milk.
- Low fat fruit smoothie.
- Sustagen Sport®.



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SASMA supports National Pharmacies as a destination for all sports health products.



The information in this brochure is of a general nature. Individual circumstances may require modification of general advice from an appropriate Health Professional eg. Doctor.

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FUEL UP



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The lifestyle of an athlete, both recreational and elite, can pose many nutritional challenges. Many athletes are concerned with what they eat immediately before an event, however what you eat every day plays an important role in improving performance and keeping you healthy.

FUEL UP WITH CARBOHYDRATES

Carbohydrate is an essential fuel source for exercise. This is particularly so during extended periods of high-intensity training. Inadequate carbohydrate intake can result in fatigue, poor recovery and can prevent high quality training and performance.

- Your daily carbohydrate requirements depend on the total amount of exercise you undertake. On days where you have higher levels of activity, your intake of carbohydrate should increase.
- Choose mostly nutritious, everyday carbohydrate foods such as breakfast cereals, wholegrain bread, pasta, rice, potatoes, legumes/lentils, fresh fruit and vegetables, dried fruit, fruit juice, milk, custard and yoghurt.
- When training levels are high, try topping up carbohydrate needs with extra choices such as jam, honey, cordial and sports drinks.
- Each meal should be based on carbohydrate-rich foods, and this is especially important after exercise.
- You should always be prepared and bring plenty of drinking water to your training sessions and competitions.



FUEL UP WITH PROTEINS

Protein is made up of amino acids and is used by the body for the building and repair of muscles.

Some people may require extra protein, or benefit from the convenience of a supplement. However, in most cases protein needs can be met with a healthy balanced diet that includes lean meat, fish, poultry, low fat dairy products, eggs, nuts, soy produces and legumes.

Vegetarians should include a wide variety of plant protein sources in their diet, as well as milk products, to ensure consumption of protein is adequate.

If you are unsure if you are meeting your protein requirements, or think protein supplements may be convenient for your training schedule, you should seek advice from a Sports Dietitian.

Fat provides additional energy and is a source of fat-soluble vitamins. High fat intake can contribute to excess body fat which may impair performance. Foods high in fat can sometimes be eaten at the expense of carbohydrate foods, this can result in inadequate carbohydrate intake for performance.

General guidelines for health and performance:

- Choose lean meats and low fat dairy products.
- Limit added fats such as butter and oil when cooking, and at the table when eating.
- Avoid fried foods, takeaways and high fat snacks such as chips and chocolate.
- Include plenty of fruits and vegetables, as well as some good essential fats such as avocados, fish, (especially salmon) and nuts. Almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts, pumpkin seeds, flax seeds, and sunflower seeds can be enjoyed plain as a snack (in moderation, as they are calorie-dense).

FUEL UP FOR COMPETITION

The pre-event meal provides a final opportunity to top up carbohydrate stores and prepare for competition. This is especially important for events lasting longer than an hour.

To ensure food is digested prior to competition eat a meal at least 2 – 4 hours before, or a lighter snack 1 – 2 hours before competing.

To avoid abdominal discomfort, choose carbohydrate-rich foods that are low in fat and fibre, eg plain pasta with tomato sauce, toast with jam, low fat creamed rice, canned spaghetti, cereal with skim milk.

Choose foods that you are familiar with and plan ahead.

FUEL UP DURING COMPETITION

When exercise and competition lasts longer than an hour and is of moderate to high intensity, carbohydrates can be beneficial to maintain exercise intensity. Sports drinks, gels, orange segments or muesli bars may all be appropriate – depending on your event. If you are participating in longer events you should discuss your fuel intake with a Sports Dietitian.

When competing in several events over a day:

- Be prepared and take food and water with you.
- Choose foods that you are familiar with.
- Choose carbohydrate-rich snacks such as bananas, fruit tubs, low fat cereal bars, rice cakes with honey and sandwiches. If solid foods are of concern, consider liquid meal supplements such as fruit smoothies or low fat flavoured milk.
- Maintain hydration through regular intake of water.

