

Exercise Nutrition and Hydration

Are you an athlete training for a sport? Are you working to improve your strength and endurance? Are you trying to loose weight by going to the Rec more often? Or, are you exercising simply to improve your overall health and well-being? If you answered yes to any of the above questions, there is some important information you need to know about eating and drinking right so you can perform your best and make the most of your workouts and training. A nutrition and hydration plan based on **your** own needs can help maximize your performance and health as you exercise. Experiment with different types of foods and fluids and keep a record of what does and does not work so you can learn what works best for you and make your own personal plan.



3 to 4 hours before exercise:

- Consume a pre-exercise meal that is low in fat and fiber and includes small amounts of protein. Fat and fiber ensure total digestion prior to your workout and protein helps to build and repair muscles and will help reduce muscle soreness following your workout.
Try this: Have peanut butter and honey on a slice of toast, a turkey and Swiss sandwich with an apple, a fruit and yogurt smoothie with low-fat granola, or hummus with pita bread.
- Be sure to **drink according to your thirst** during the day before your workout.

30 to 60 minutes before exercise:

- Consume a **carbohydrate-rich snack** to give your muscles and body the extra fuel and energy it needs to perform its best.
Try this: Have a granola bar, a piece of fruit, or a jam sandwich.
- Make sure you drink 8 to 20 ounces of fluid in this time period just before your workout.

During Exercise

- Will you be exercising for a long period of time? If so, be sure to **consume carbohydrate-rich foods** during your game, race, or workout. Make sure to **consume these foods with fluids** to speed up fuel transport to muscles.

Try this: Have bread with honey, a banana, a sports food (gels or gummy chews), or a low-fat granola for a boost of healthy energy.

- As you're exercising, **drink at least 16 to 24 ounces per hour or 4 to 6 ounces every 15 minutes** to help prevent fatigue, electrolyte imbalances, or poor attention and decision making.

Don't forget this: If exercising under an hour, hydrate with water. If exercising more than an hour, hydrate with a sports drink.



- **Rehydrate as needed** to replenish the fluids and electrolytes you lost in sweat.
- Restore your muscle fuel with **carbohydrates** and repair and develop new muscles tissue with **protein**. Be sure to eat your recovery snack or meal **within 15 to 60 minutes** following your workout.

Try this for a post-workout snack: Make a smoothie with yogurt and frozen bananas or have graham crackers and peanut butter with low-fat chocolate milk and your favorite fruit.

Try this for a post-workout meal: Have a pita bread sandwich with turkey and veggies and a side of pretzels and low-fat milk. Or, add some variety to your recovery meal and have stir fry with lean steak, broccoli, bell peppers, carrots, and brown rice. Try a rice bowl with beans, cheese, salsa, avocado, and whole grain tortilla chips.

Tip: If you do not have an appetite following a workout, choose more liquid foods like yogurt or smoothies.