



# SPORTS NUTRITION



The Importance Of Nutrition and Exercise For Overall Health



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# Introduction

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**Sports have been present for over a hundred years now. Nutrition and exercise can't be separated at all.**

It had been part of sports since pre-historic times. The usual sports before done by cavemen were hunting. They hunt for animals or gather food to eat for survival. They use stones, bones, or sharp objects like wood to kill animals.

With this, hunting became an activity that possessed physical abilities. Hunting became a root for athletes. People were competing against their strength and abilities during times of hunting. It soon gained to the idea that these kinds of sports need nutrition and exercise for improvement.

Ancient sports were not limited to men. Women of Egypt performed gymnastics for their temples. As time went by, gymnastics turned into religious dances.

We are all familiar with the Olympic game held every four years. The Olympic game originated from the Greeks. They give their best

athletes nutritious food and enough exercise to maintain good physical health. It is where their skills and abilities are showcased, and Greeks give importance to their athletes as they will compete in different sports during the event.

### **The Greeks Source Of Nutrition**

During the Greek era, goats and cattle were killed for food. Both are good sources of protein. Another thing included in their nutrition is fish. They mostly got fish from the Mediterranean Sea.

The Greeks considered carbohydrates and vegetables as an important part of their meal. The Romans rendered their soldiers a nutritious meal to sustain strength and energy on the battlefield.

Alexander the Great, one of the greatest conquerors in the world, discovered that onions are essential to health. He brought this to his empire because it had a nutritional value good for his soldiers and people. Aside from onions, vegetables like cabbage, turnips, beets, and others were also tended on their farmland.

### **The Importance Of Nutrition and Exercise**

Ancient people gave importance to nutrition and exercise just like what sportsmen do today. They make sure that their soldiers maintain a daily routine of exercises to keep them stable during training. They also organize a meal that has a balanced nutritional content to sustain their energy.

Ancient people who trained soldiers developed food exclusively for the soldiers. The meat was only prepared in a minimal amount for soldiers, but it was soon discovered that eating more meat makes a soldier stronger. The meat was then popular during the 5th century BC. Meat was initiated into the soldier's diet.

Nowadays, we still consider and practice exercise and nutrition for physical strength. This is a solution to our sports need. This is how athletes cope with fatigue and this will boost performance in sports.

## **Sports Nutrition Information To Stay Fit**

If you are completely unaware of the sports nutritional diet, then this article will help you to understand it. It is good to have knowledge of sports nutritional diet because it can help every human to keep their health better. It is not necessary that if the name is sports nutrition, then it is just helpful for the athletes only; it can give the same benefits to any person.

According to the research conducted on the eating habits of athletes before and after their training sessions, it is concluded that it's their diet that determines their performance and recovery. A diet that has adequate nutrients required by a body can definitely enhance the performance and recovery of any human being.

This nutrient diet also helps with the integrity of muscles. A diet that consists of an excessive number of vitamins or minerals, or deficient otherwise can do no good to help the body. Sometimes a non-nutritional diet can possibly harm the health of any individual.

Carbohydrates and proteins are rich sources of energy and if the combination of both of these can be taken in the right proportion and at the right time then it can be very helpful during workout and training sessions. The timing of the right nutrition at the right time is also important to enhance the capabilities of performing daily activities.

With the help of sports nutrition information, you can conclude whether you have excessive fat in your body or not. If there is an accumulation of excessive fat, then you must increase the intake of calcium-enriched food in your diet. Calcium helps the bones by diminishing the chance of bone diseases.

An adequate intake of calcium also helps to fight against obesity. It is also important to understand the body system before taking carbohydrates because sometimes excessive intake of carbohydrates can cause damage to your health.

It is very mandatory to eat only adequate amounts of carbohydrates, or other minerals and vitamins. An excessive amount of any above



## Sports Nutrition

things can cause adverse effects that won't be good for health. If you are an athlete and want to perform better, then you must avoid all those non-nutritional foods that may reduce your capabilities.

Many people just believe that they are earning to eat good food and drink beverages this type of activity is not considered a wise act.

Complete knowledge of what to eat and what not to and how much quantity your body requires is an important aspect to keep your body healthy and then only an athlete or any normal person can attain the higher capability of doing work or playing sports.

Sports nutrition information is not that hard to understand but the only thing that exists is a contradiction.

Choosing the right food for your diet with an adequate amount of food can help you to attain all the dreams of being a superstar in any sports or for a normal person, it helps to be active throughout the day and give good performance at the office.

# Chapter 1: Vitamin and Mineral Diets

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**If you care for your health and if you want to keep fit, you should not overlook the importance of nutrition.**

Doing sport is not enough. There are various nutrients that a balanced diet needs to contain to provide the body with the necessary number of proteins, fats, vitamins and minerals, dietary fiber, and water. If these nutrients are not incorporated into the diet, the result might be a metabolism disorder.

Minerals and vitamins are responsible for sports performance. It is therefore vital for sportsmen to have a diet rich in vitamins so that their energy balance can be maintained.

Athletes need to consume daily up to 1500 kilocalories. Hockey players need an amount of 3000 kcal per day. This amount of energy can be easily taken from food.

If the food people eat is varied, mineral and vitamin intake is satisfactory and there is no need for supplementation. Vegetables and fruit are rich in vitamins. They are also excellent antioxidants. Grains are also an important source of minerals and vitamins.

Athletes normally reach more than two-thirds of the necessary amount of minerals and vitamins included in the customary Recommended Dietary Allowances. The eaten food can provide a double quantity of RDA, making it possible for athletes who need high-calorie intake to assimilate up to 6,000kili-calories daily.

However, most athletes choose supplementation to improve their performance. It is important to notice that nutritionally supplementing the diet does not result in improving endurance, cardiovascular function, physical work capacity, or muscle strength. Vitamins and minerals can do that.

If the diet of an athlete does not meet his energy needs, vitamin supplements are added to guarantee optimal nutrition. Multivitamin supplements which ensure a Daily Value of 100% offer a proper vitamin balance.

They should not be regarded as a substitute for eating a wide range of foods as they contain fiber and phytochemicals very useful for health. Several sports supplements are based on beta carotene antioxidants. About 450 carotenoids can be found in food as well.

Mineral intake is also an important matter which is not to be neglected. Calcium, zinc, or iron is vital for athletes. Calcium intake recommendations are made considering the levels able to ensure calcium retention, reduce bone loss, and improve bone mineral density.

If the calcium level is low, there is a high risk of fracture in athletes. Broccoli, dairy products, fish, and juices are only a few of the many sources of food that ensure adequate calcium storage.

Iron is necessary for hemoglobin and myoglobin synthesis and is responsible for aerobic metabolism and oxygen transport. Iron lessening is one of the most frequent iron deficiencies among athletes.

Satisfactory amounts of iron can be reached while consuming dark poultry, red meat, fortified cereals, vegetables, or grains.

An essential component for the processes of protein synthesis, immunization, and healing, zinc is present in antioxidant enzymes, as well as in enzymes responsible for energy metabolism. The mineral is found in seafood, meat, or poultry.

One should keep in mind the fact that mineral excess can cause problems with digestion and other mineral absorption. It can also be toxic to the body.

### **Sports Nutrition Supplements**

Outstanding performance requires hardworking, continuous training, and good nutrition. Athletes should be aware of it. Exercise alone is not enough.

All sports activities ought to be based on good nutrition and a healthy diet. If these requirements are met, top performance will be naturally achieved. The human body needs a large variety of nutrients to work at its best.

Unfortunately, there are some essential nutrients that cannot be taken from food. It should also be mentioned the fact that people are sometimes reluctant to food intake. Consequently, these nutrient gaps can only be filled with sports nutrition supplements.

Taking nutrition supplements should not be a complicated process at all. At the same time, it must not be regarded as simply swallowing some pills. There are certain aspects that need to be considered when deciding to take nutrition supplements.

First of all, training should be done in a clever way, no matter the sport involved. Secondly, one needs to make sure that the main source of nutrients is healthy food. Finally, it is important to know that nutrition supplements are to be taken only to improve sports performance.

For better identification of the nutrition supplements that ought to be taken, an athlete needs to keep an eye on what he usually eats. He should make note of what he longs for before, while, and after training or racing. He will thus become aware of the nutrients he gets from food, as well as of the missing ones, and eventually identify the necessary nutrition supplements.

Healthy eating habits must be accompanied by proper workouts if performance is the goal. In case discipline is missing, a strict diet must be planned to include ordinary food and nutrition supplements. Certain nutritional information must be considered when a favorable workout routine is sought.

Establishing definite goals from the very beginning is the best way to identify both food and nutritional supplements that must be taken in. A certain fat composition or the presence of bad and good fats might be targeted. Meal frequency and body type of weight training are also elements that can be taken into consideration.

Sports nutritional supplements are already present on the market. One can choose from protein or vitamin supplements, creatine, glutamine, weight loss products, or protein bars produced by brand names such as Optimum Nutrition, Muscletech, Xendadrine EFX, Hydroxycut, or Twinlab.

Apparently, the choice might be difficult because each brand promises something new and unique. Nonetheless, the choice must take into consideration the product's nutritional value and its benefits for health. Otherwise, no product will be successfully administered.

There are nutrients that have been beneficial in most cases. At the same time, it happens to come across situations in which the body has already assimilated enough nutrients from regular food. Such cases would not be obvious if there were no information and awareness.

It is important to remember that nutrition supplements ought to be taken in only to fill the existing nutrition gap. Any excess might seriously harm the body.



## **Do I Take Them Or Not?**

Supplements are something that many people wonder about. Are they good for you? Will they enhance my performance? Are they fair to take?

There are many various types of supplements on the market. The goal of any supplement is to supplement your diet. This means it will provide for the diet that you may not already have.

In that, it goes without saying that nature is always going to be better for you. That means that it is a much better option for you to ensure that you have high-quality natural foods in your diet rather than having a bag full of vitamins and minerals that you have to take.

Only you can truly answer if supplements are in fact right for you and your needs. There is no easy way to answer this question, but we can break it down to help you to understand both points of view.

As an athlete, your body will demand more nutrients including vitamins and minerals of all sorts. It needs this as well as additional calories to keep up with your demand.

It is not simplistic to handle this need though. The best way to get the things you need to balance your diet is to get them from natural, whole foods. To do this, you need to really concentrate on what you need, what is included in what you eat, and then ensure it is all balanced for optimum nutrition.

That is not an easy task to do, though. Not only do you need to increase the levels of calories that you consume, but you also need to consider the various minerals and vitamins your body needs to make that happen.

In most cases, if you can eat a well-balanced diet full of vegetables and variety, you can achieve these needs while doing it.

But, if you cannot commit to this level of dedication, then providing yourself with a solid supplement can be helpful. Yet, you still have to pay attention to what you are taking.

When purchasing vitamins, you need to make sure that they are the highest of quality and that they are easily absorbed into your body. They should be purchased from a health food store or someplace that is designed for optimum health products.

### **Beware**

Some vitamins can be dangerous if you take too much of them. This can do the exact opposite of what you are trying to accomplish. If this is something you are not sure about, seek out the help of a dietician, your pharmacist, or even your doctor.

Vitamins are powerful things, and they need to be kept regulated for your own safety.

Another reason to speak with your doctor is to ensure you are not deficient in any of your vitamins as well. This will help you to balance yourself naturally and therefore find the best success overall.

## Chapter 2: Essential Part Of Sports Nutrition

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**Keeping your body hydrated is a very essential part of the process of sports nutrition.**

Your body needs fuel in the form of fluids. It is a very essential part of your well-being and life in general.

If you do not have enough water in your body at any given time, your body will ultimately suffer. It is a fact of life that cannot be denied.

As an athlete, not providing yourself with the necessary amount of water, or limiting it, can cause you to have numerous problems including the risk of serious health complications.

On top of that, your game will suffer without the right amount of water.

### **Why Water Matters**

Without taking you too far back to science class, think about the serious job that water has in your life and your body.

It has to be there to move the vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients through your body. It keeps blood moving which carries the fuel that your cells need for energy.

Additionally, water helps to move out the waste products from your cells. This allows them to keep your cells at an optimal level.

Finally, your body uses fluids to keep the body at the right temperature, thereby protecting your health overall.

Can you live without water? No. When it comes to sports nutrition, it is nothing short of essential. How water helps in sports nutrition is important for you to know and to practice.

When your body burns energy, it produces heat. That heat races through your body.

If you think of your body as a car, if the engine gets too hot, it cannot perform as it should. Therefore, you will find a way to keep your engine cool, water is a necessity.

Additionally, your body needs to have these fluids to allow you to carry all the nutrients throughout your body. Since you are working on developing muscles, and enhancing your physical characteristics, you realize that your body needs those nutrients to get where they need to go.

For that, they need water to push them through. Water helps your body to grow, but also helps you to repair cells as you work hard at achieving your goals.

### **The Importance**

If you lose 2% of your body's fluid, your overall performance will considerably drop.

If you lose 5% of your body's fluid, you can find yourself facing heat exhaustion, which is not good. Now, you are barely moving.

If you lose 10% of your body's fluid, you are at risk for heatstroke and even death through dehydration. In other words, game over.

### **How Much Is Enough?**

Do you think you can just drink a glass of water when you are thirsty? Thirst is actually the first sign of dehydration.

If you get to the point of being thirsty, you have already lost at least one percent of your body's fluids and are already putting your body at risk.

There is not too much, drink more than enough to quench your thirst. Do not stop when you are no longer thirsty either.

It is essential that you are always keeping those fluids moving in your body, pumping energy to your cells so that you can perform.

There are plenty of misconceptions out there about how much water is enough water for you to have in your body.

The fact is that your body should not be restricted during your practice, your warm-up, or during your game. Your body needs water consistently throughout.

### **I'm In Good Shape, I Know What My Body Needs**

This is a poor attitude to have. When your body tells you it is in need of fluid, it's too far gone to keep performance up. Instead, your mind needs to think, "I need water soon."

Now, if you are a conditioned athlete, well on your way to success, your body will need additional water than that of someone that is, well, farther behind.



Your body is burning fuel faster and that means more heat is produced quicker. On top of that, it is depleting the energy faster, so fluid needs to get there faster. Your body is probably sweating more too, which means even more of a need.

### **Tips For Fluids**

Here are some basic things that you need to keep in mind when it comes to water.

Drink water in smaller amounts, more often. This will help to provide a constant level of fluid. If you attempt to drink water too quickly, you get that heavy feeling in your stomach that you just do not need or want to have. Remember, small, more often.

Six to eight ounces ever 15 to 20 minutes during your game or during your work out is ideal. If you feel you need more, then increase this amount slightly until you feel comfortable about it.

Don't go for ice water. You need water that is at the right temperature too. The right temperature is cool water, about 50 to 40 degrees.

This will help to get rid of the heat in your body but will not sit heavily in your stomach. Cool water is absorbed quickly by the body, putting it right to work for you.

Weigh yourself before and after your workout or competition. Drink eight ounces of water for every pound you have lost for optimum results in your workout. Make it a habit!

Don't dehydrate yourself for weight loss benefits. While you will drop a few pounds by restricting what you drink, your overall performance will significantly be reduced if you do this.

Therefore, you need to ensure that you follow good hydration steps even when weighing in is important.

Skip the caffeine. Caffeine is actually like a diuretic and will increase the amount that you have to urinate. Therefore, you are not hydrating yourself, but putting yourself at risk.

Drinks like this include any type of sports drink that has caffeine as well as things like soda pop, teas, coffee and even foods with high amounts of caffeine.

A sure way to tell if you are dehydrated or drinking enough water is to pay attention to your urine. Urine that is dark or only a small amount is a sign of dehydration. It should be fairly clear and there should be a good amount of it.

### **Knowing What To Drink**

As you can see, we really have pushed the word water here. That's because water is the best type of fluid for you to consume.

Yet, there are many various sports drinks on the market that claim they too can help you.

When considering whether or not you need to drink sports drinks, you need to consider what your practice has been and what your body needs.

**To Drink Water:** Most of the times you will only need to drink water. Your body does not need fuel from the fluid you drink.

You should drink water whenever you are enjoying a standard workout or game.

Generally, if your physical activity is that of fewer than 90 minutes at a time, you should only need to drink water.

**To Drink Sports Drinks:** Now, if your body will have to go for a longer period of time, or you have to compete quite often (several games in just a short amount of time) then you need to consider sports drinks.

When drinking sports drinks, you want to ensure that you find those that contain carbohydrates and electrolytes. Your body will need these in these stressful situations.

The sports drink you choose should have less than eight percent in total solids which includes both carbohydrates as well as electrolytes.

If you go with something that has more, it is not easily absorbed into your body, delaying any benefit it may have. Dilute sports drinks by 50% if they contain over this amount.

Avoid fructose sports drinks. Look at the label. If you see it has fructose as the only source of carbohydrates, then you will want to avoid it. It will take your body longer to use these products and delay results even further.

### **Juices**

You can use juices at the same time that you would use the sports drinks, only during long, hard sessions of endurance.

If you do use these products to help you to gain back some of your body's necessary power, you will want to dilute them. To do this, dilute an equal amount of fruit juice to the same amount of water.

You will do this because standard fruit juices have a high concentration of carbohydrates. This amount is far too much for your body to use easily. You should consider fruit juices such as orange juice to refuel on.

When you use these tips to help you keep your body fueled, you will find yourself completely ready to perform at a high level. It is necessary to insure you provide optimum levels of hydration as it applies to sports nutrition.

## Chapter 3: Fueling Your Body

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**Food. Your body needs this simple tool to help it to do virtually every single thing that it has to do. From breathing to walking to playing your game, your body depends on food to fuel it.**

While water is essential to life, food is essential to performance. Without the right amounts, types, and timing for the food you eat, your body will not be able to reach its highest level of performance no matter what you plan to do.

No workout will work for your body more so than the fuel that you give it. It has a direct relation to your performance and therefore is one of the building blocks in successful sports nutrition.

### **The Balanced Win**

As an athlete, your specific needs are your own, but there is no doubt that if you want to win at physical activity, you need your body to have a balanced diet. You probably have heard this many times, but it

is the same as day one. You need to consume a balanced diet of foods to be successful.

The combination of foods will provide your body with all the essential building blocks that it needs. This includes vitamins, minerals, fats, carbohydrates, and proteins. Each of these elements plays its role, one that is crucial to your success.

Think of food as a team effort. You know that you are only as good as your team is, right? When you do not provide all of the right nutrients to your body, to limit them, they cannot perform as a team and then the overall whole suffers.

How many times does the star athlete go down in a game and the team crumbles around them? Or how many times can someone that is a smaller asset and the star no longer hold the team up? The same is true for food.

The body needs each one of these pieces for the whole to work. The goal that you have is to learn what it needs and how it needs them to get the whole working well.

### **Foods: A Plan For Successful Diet Management**

Eating food is a must, of course, but what you eat is just as important as how much you eat. So, let's break it all down for you. Do you remember the food pyramid from school? That is the ideal thing for you to use for your basic sports nutrition education.

While we will tweak it later, this is the overall best thing to use to determine where your level of nutrition stacks up.

### **What You Need**

Here's the breakdown for you. But we want to strongly inform you that what is listed here is the minimum of what your body needs to perform. The more you demand from your body, the more it will need. We will go into more detail on what that will include later.



### **Dairy Group**

Your body needs dairy to provide your body with calcium. Proteins, vitamin A, and riboflavin are also found in dairy, making it necessary for good nutrition.

You should consume at least 3 servings per day which is about 8 ounces of liquid or about one and a half ounces of solids.

You will find dairy in milk, yogurt, and cheese. You should limit the amount of fat that comes in from these items though. Low-fat products increase the good while decreasing the bad.

### **Vegetable Group**

Vegetables are ideal. You will get many of your nutrients like vitamins and minerals from vegetables. You need an all-around good variety of foods to fit this need.

To balance what you eat, try to eat lots of different colors and look for dark colors for more benefit.

You should have five servings of vegetables per day which is about half of a cup of raw or cooked vegetables, one cup of leafy vegetables, or six ounces of juice.

Great choices in vegetables include tomatoes, broccoli, and Brussels sprouts for their high levels of vitamin C. For vitamin C, go with carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, greens, and spinach.

Darker colors, like dark greens, deep reds, oranges, and yellows are ideal for a good overall nutritional value.

### **Meat Group**

With meat comes protein, the very building block for muscles. Therefore, you need to ensure that you get enough protein in your diet

to allow you to build your strength. Meats also include iron, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and zinc.

You need to consume three servings per day in meats. This is about three ounces of cooked meats, two eggs, one cup of cooked beans or lentils, or four tablespoons of peanut butter.

Good choices include lean amounts of beef, pork, lamb, poultry, dry peas and beans, peanut butter, and eggs.

### **Grains Group**

You will learn that carbohydrates are a necessary building block for energy in the body and many will come from grains. They provide complex carbohydrates that you need including starch and fiber.

Additionally, they contain protein, the B vitamin group, and iron.

You need to consume eleven servings of carbohydrates per day. This is about one slice of bread, three or four crackers, half of a cup of cereal, rice or pasta, and one ounce of breakfast cereal.

Good choices for sports nutrition include grains that are whole grain. In this group, you find cereals, bread, pasta, and rice. Whole grains are a must.

### **Fruits**

Fruits are another source of many of your necessary minerals and vitamins. They have vitamin C which is powerful and can be found in your citrus foods.

Additionally, melons, strawberries, and blueberries are all great sources. Apricots are great for Vitamin A.

You need to consume four servings per day of fruits which is one whole fruit item like eating a banana or an apple. Half of a grapefruit,

six ounces of fruit juice, or a quarter of a cup of dried fruits equals a serving.

### **Calories**

When it comes to your fuel intake, you also need to keep in mind that the more that you do, the more that you will need to provide your body with fuel. If you want to go farther in your vehicle, it needs more gas, right? The same here is true.

We monitor how much we intake by calorie count. The average person will need to consume about 3000 calories per day. If you are intensely athletic, you should increase this to 5000 calories a day.

But you must do this in the right manner. That is, you should increase it through eating additions of all food groups that we have mentioned, and it should be done with lean foods rather than fatty foods.

Depending on the amount of exercise, practice, competition and physical exertion that you need to put out will ultimately determine the number of calories you need.

You do not want to eat too much so that you gain weight in fat, but you do want to provide enough for weight gain in muscle as well as for energy use.

## Chapter 4: Meal Planning

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**We have broken it all down for you now. Think you are done, ready to go out there and win at your game?**

Not just yet, but soon you will be. As you have learned, there is much to get your body fed the right amounts of fuel at the right time. It is not easy, but it can and does get done every day by athletes.

Now that we have broken it all down, we can start to put it back together for you.

To do that, we will work on developing a pre-game plan for what you should eat, how you should eat it, and how much you should eat before your athletic performance.

What you eat right before your competition or performance is a direct reflection of what will happen in that performance. In short, your body will only perform to the level that you have prepped it for.

Have you ever been mid-event only to feel so tired that you just feel as if you cannot take just one more step? This is your fuel running out.

If you are a car, you are done, on the side of the road waiting for your driver to refuel you. But, if the driver prepared before the start of the drive, you would not have any problem hitting the destination and doing it in the way that you want to succeed.

### **It's Starts Before Game Day**

One thing to take note of is the fact that your pre-game planning needs to start several days before you head out there to compete.

Don't plan to just wake up, eat breakfast, and hit the run. You need to plan several days for what will happen just this one day, this one race, this one competition.

As we talked about, the goal is to store up enough glycogen in your body so that you can withstand what needs to be done during your event. We are not talking about carbohydrate loading, mind you.

This would be something you only do when you are going for a long intense effort, not for a standard event that is short-lived.

By following a good regimen, your body will be better able to meet the needs it will be required to meet. The right plan can also do things that you may not have thought of needing to consider.

- It can help to keep your blood sugar at a level amount that controls your energy amounts.
- It helps to build up the muscle and liver glycogen that we have talked about.
- You will have virtually nothing in your stomach at game time, meaning that you do not have that full, can't do a thing feeling.
- It helps you to avoid hunger as well as an upset stomach during your event.
- It finally helps to keep your body completely hydrated so that your energy is flowing where it needs to be during your event.



Now, there are many ways to take the next plan, but we want you to know that this is just a basic plan. It is not necessarily perfect for everyone and will not provide you with a perfect outcome for your events.

But it can help you to get back on track, get your body ready to go, and then allow you to change it up as you see necessarily down the road.

### **Things You Have To Know**

As someone that is competing in an athletic event, you need to position yourself for success and the only way that you can do that is to provide the necessary fuel for your body.

Here's a breakdown of what you should be doing now...

Your last meal before your event should happen no shorter than three full hours before your event. Do not try to eat a meal right before.

Your stomach will be upset, will weigh you down and you will feel no benefit from the foods consumed.

Keep yourself fully hydrated for several days before your event. Of course, you do want to try to always remain hydrated but remember that it takes the body time to re-hydrate itself (sometimes days even) when you are dehydrated.

Now, the meal before your event should be high in starch. It should be carbohydrate full to allow your body to easily digest it, quickly and effectively, so that you have the necessary power to go.

It is also helpful in maintaining your body's blood sugar level as well.

In that meal and maybe even the one before it, limit the amount of protein that you are consuming. Remember, proteins are not meant to be energy. They are harder for the body to digest and will hold you back ultimately.

You do not want to end up dehydrated because you have consumed too many proteins either.

Do not eat foods or drink fluids that contain caffeine. As you remember, caffeine is something that can cause your body to dehydrate and simply not give you the right outcome.

Even energy drinks that have caffeine in them will ultimately restrict your abilities in the events.

Do not eat foods that have not been found in our food chart. You do not want to eat foods that are high in sugar at all.

This will really not do anything but keep your energy waning rather than help you to power through.

Drop the oils. We also mentioned how fats are not a good thing for your body. So, especially in this last meal before your event, limit the foods that you eat that are high in fats.

Do not forget to consider the butter on your pancakes and the oil in your salad dressings. You will find fats everywhere and they need to be noticed.

### **What Should I Eat?**

So, you know what you want to eat on that last meal, right? You are right, it does seem limiting, but really, it does not have to be.

Go back to our breakdown of foods that fit well within the categories of carbohydrates (check out the grains!) in proteins (meats and dairy products) and avoid those foods that you find are high in fats.

You can eat anything you want as long as it fits within the calorie suggestions and in the food groups, we have listed there.

# Chapter 5: Food For The Athlete

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**Are you an athletic person? Then you must experience fatigue as you add sports to your hobbies.**

Sportspeople need that extra energy to go on with their activities. Athletes experience increased energy consumption especially when they're into extreme sports.

To comply with the energy requirements for sports activities, athletes must execute daily exercises and intake of proper diet to boost their performance.

The right food with complete nutrition can replenish a person's energy. Training is important in sports but is sure that you have eaten well before training goes on or you'll end up exhausted.

Don't eat anything. Be guided by what you eat. Discipline starts with the food you purchase.

*Here are the right nutrients a player must consume:*

### **Frozen Is Better**

Frozen foods are beneficial for a sportsperson. It does not only instantly serve you but saves so much time when it comes to preparation and maintaining cleanliness. Nowadays, frozen foods are more improved with the possibility to freeze fish, meat, fruits, and vegetables in a sealed package.

They are more nutritious and fresher because they can be stored for weeks in your fridge preserving their nutrients. You will not only undergo a dilemma in food preparation but will have a healthy diet to be ingested. You can try organic vegetables and brown rice and other variants. Be wise that what you choose contributes to having a healthy status in life.

### **Choose The Appropriate Canned Good**

Not all canned products are bad for the health. Yes, canned goods are rich with sodium and preservatives but choosing the right one can guide you with your diet. Do you know that canned beans are rich in protein? They are not only affordable but healthful. You can even spice up your meal by adding it to stews or tacos.

You can also buy canned goods with tuna and chicken in water. They are known to contain Omega 3 which is good for the heart. A can of tomatoes will also do, and you can add it with pasta for added carbohydrates.

If you're a peanut butter lover, then good for you because it healthily contains many calories. Raw peanut butter is better because good nutrients are still retained in it. Limit your consumption of peanut butter because too much is fatty and can increase the risk of cardiovascular disease.

### **Include Oatmeal, Yogurt, Blueberries, Salmon, And Sweet Potatoes In Your Fridge**

Oatmeal is made of whole grain. It has fibers that eliminate cholesterol and fats from the body. One good source of energy is the intake of

carbohydrates. Oatmeal is rich in carbohydrates and maintains energy for a longer time, especially during a workout.

With enough intake of yogurt, more calcium will be absorbed in the body thus this prevents fatigue when doing training or sports.

Antioxidants are significant in minimal damage to cells when undergoing activities that are exhausting. Blueberries are a source of energy, fiber, and vitamin C to keep you strengthened when performing sports activities.

Sweet potatoes are very nutritious. They contain vitamin C and E that promotes muscle recovery.

A high source of protein for maximum performance in sports is eating salmon. It has a nutritional content of Omega 3 beneficial to the heart.

Choose what you eat and maintain a healthy diet. Remember that learning how to balance health can save you from stress, especially if you're active in sports.

### **Eat Nutritional Food That Enhances The Capability**

A human body requires an adequate amount of nutritional food to perform daily work. Nutritional food is very much necessary to keep our bodies active and healthy.

Nutritional food is important for the growth of a body as well as for the strong mind, without it no one can stay healthy and have a sharp mind. The importance of nutritional diet increases for people who are athletes. These nutrients are the fuel to the cells of our body that helps us to perform various activities.

Many people lack the proper level of nutrients in their body because of a lack of correct information and some people just eat whatever they want, and it doesn't matter to them whether it's a nutritional food or not. Because of the lack of knowledge of healthy nutritional food, sometimes we eat unnecessary food items that will do no good to our bodies.

You must have heard that food that tastes good is also good for health. This philosophy about food is a misconception. If you don't want to be fat then you must keep an eye on what you are eating, and if that is good for your health or not.

People often eat unhealthy food (junk foods) to save time, but this could result in fat accumulation which is not good for health.

The key to a good performance of an athlete is nutritional food. Some athletes lack the knowledge of nutritional food and that affects their capabilities.

The requirement of nutrients by a human body differs based on the type of body, age, and sex. For athletes, this categorization of nutrients is more different than that of normal people. The requirements of nutrients of an athlete depend on what sport he plays.

Some sports require more energy, so an athlete must take all the nutrients that can enhance the energy level in their body and help to compete.

It is always advocated to eat less saturated fat food items because the extra fat in our diet cannot get digested and it accumulates in the body's muscles. These fats restrict the proper supply of blood to the muscles which result in muscles fatigue.

Certain food items should be avoided in meals to minimize the risk of fat accumulation. Food that is cooked or fried in too much oil should be a big NO. You can also join any weight loss program to burn the excessive fat from your body.

So, it is very much necessary for an athlete to prepare a diet chart that can give him the required carbohydrate and protein which are the main source of energy with other vitamins and minerals that can help the body to grow properly.

Some nutrition tips: Say NO to white sugar and all the eatables that have a natural sweetener in them. Eat fiber-enriched food to detoxify unhealthy foods. You can also consult a diet expert to get the right

knowledge of nutritional food and you can manage your diet chart accordingly.



# Chapter 6: Vegetarian Sports Nutrition

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**Let's say you are highly involved in sports, but you are a vegan and are worried about getting the right nutrition.**

Don't worry. You can get all the nutrition you need while still living your vegetarian lifestyle and participating in sports.

You are not required to make sacrifices in your diet just because you don't want to eat meat. You might find that a vegetarian diet is extremely conducive to allowing you to participate in sports because the nutrition you will find in vegetables, fruits, and grains will give you more energy.

The first thing you need to remember is that you must eat before a workout so that your body can begin to process the food and give you the nutritional requirements you need to sustain a heavy work out and be able to have enough energy to participate in the sports that you like to do. That means that vegetarians must get a lot of

carbohydrates before they play sports and then let the nutrition that is contained in those carb-loaded foods work for them.

You will also need to eat a good vegetarian meal after you are done participating in sports so that you can replenish the nutrition that is naturally lost through sweat during your workout.

However, you will want to avoid carbs as much as possible in this meal since carbs can easily be converted into fat and negate all of the benefits you have just given yourself.

If you are heavily involved in sports and you are a Lacto-vegetarian, we recommend that you get a large number of nuts and grains which are filled with carbohydrates as well as a lot of fruits that can give your body some highly needed water that will eventually be sweated out during your sports workout.

Athletes who are vegetarians often worry about their nutrition since participating in sports is so important to keep them fit. All they need to remember is that the body needs certain vitamins and minerals to function correctly. That's where research comes into play.

Ask some of your vegetarian friends what they do before they play sports so that their nutrition doesn't suffer. Look online for suggestions about what you can do to get the most nutrition from your vegetarian diet before playing sports.

Read books and ask your doctor along the way if you are worried about nutrition as a vegetarian who participates heavily in sports. The old saying is that you can never have too much information, so seek out what is there for you and then take heed. It will all be worth it in the end!

## Seeking Good Sports Nutrition

To get maximum return from regular exercises, sportsmen nowadays are cautious about what they eat. Many choose to take sports supplements or sports nutrition to put the good things into their bodies. However, this can be a tough job without a piece of good knowledge of nutrition.

Some people simply rely on the nutritional facts and benefits given by the manufacturer. Sure, most of the things you buy at the health store have labels, but first of all, you have to learn how to read them. How about those stuff-like gummy bears and burgers? They don't come with labels.

The truth is that as the pace of our society increases, eating has become a chore to some, rather than a chance to build and heal our bodies. Often, people go for what is convenient instead of what is good for the body. As such, finding the right nutritional fact about what we eat is important to our health.

The first thing you need to learn is to know how to read the labels on the food or supplements you buy from the store. You can ask yourself questions like what is important, what do those numbers mean, and how to tell if a company is being sneaky on their label.

Learning how to read the content and nutritional value of the food or supplement is important because by knowing what the ingredients are, you will know if the food is for you. This is especially important for those ingredients that show up in the top few lists because most labels list ingredients in terms of their percentage content in the product.

If a food contains 50% sugar, you should decide whether you need that food to fuel your body.

For food that does not have nutritional facts or does not have any label at all, sometimes you can request one. Most fast-food restaurants can give you a copy of the nutritional facts about the food they sell. If not,

## Sports Nutrition

you can do some research online to find out the nutritional facts of some of the food you commonly eat.

Surprisingly, there are a lot of myths about sports nutrition. A lot of wrong information on nutrition is floating around all over the place, especially on the internet. Ensuring you receive the correct nutrition is important. It will encourage your success in any sport or nonsupport activity that you participate in.

# Chapter 7: Appetite Control Strategies

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**In the quest for weight loss and better health, the more tricks you've got up your sleeve the better.**

## **Breakfast**

Researchers found that those who skipped breakfast had a bigger waistline than the breakfast-eaters. And higher cholesterol levels, too.

It makes sense. If you skip breakfast, you're probably going to graze throughout the day. You'll likely find yourself reaching for more sugar-rich and fat-filled foods along with more soft drinks.

So, it turns out that eating a nutritious breakfast is a winning appetite control strategy. But what to eat for breakfast?

Not some sugary concoction in a box. Oatmeal is far better. And the reason oatmeal porridge makes a great breakfast is simple. It digests

slowly, which means it's releasing its energy over a longer period... helping to power you through the morning.

Better still, sprinkle some raw oat bran on your breakfast. It's a big performer in the dietary fiber department.

If you're new to having oatmeal for breakfast, start with a small amount and build up. That way your body will become accustomed to an increase in fiber intake. By starting small, you should be able to avoid gas and the sensation of bloating which can happen when your body is used to a low-fiber diet.

### **Eat Slower**

When we eat fast, fewer of the fullness hormones are released, according to a study published in *The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*.

By eating more slowly, you'll take in 4x fewer calories per minute than gobblers. That's from another study, done at the University of Rhode Island.

Two tips to do this are: put your knife and fork down between bites and breathe deeply during your meal. And there's no need to empty the plate. Just stop eating when you start to feel full.

### **Exercise**

When you exercise, the exertion releases body fat from its various storehouses and converts it into blood sugar. In turn, your elevated blood sugar level suppresses your appetite. The result is that food cravings are reduced. You don't feel the same compelling urge to eat something.

But there's more to it than that. When you feel full, that's because the neurons involved in satiety have sent "we're full down here" messages to your brain. Researchers have discovered that exercise restores the

sensitivity of those neurons. It's another way that physical activity is good for your health.

### **Good Fats**

Fat is satisfying. That's why fast food is high in fat. Fat also slows down the stomach-emptying process, so you feel fuller longer.

Nuts, avocados, and extra virgin olive oil are good sources of these good fats. When those fats reach your small intestine, they help to quieten those hunger pangs. How? By releasing hormones that moderate your hunger contractions.

Fats (along with proteins) digest more slowly than carbohydrates. So, they are more satiating, leaving you with that full feeling longer. And while you feel full, your biology is not driving you to eat again.

### **Small Pieces**

At Arizona State University, they took the same amount of food and cut it into smaller pieces. Result: the college students consumed fewer calories compared to those whose food was served in bigger pieces. A simple enough tactic, right?

### **Smaller Plates**

One of the strategies used successfully by weight reduction counselors is smaller plates. Leave the biggest dinner plates in the cupboard and use a smaller size.

When you serve a smaller meal on a smaller plate, it somehow looks more than the same quantity of food on a bigger plate. It's an easy trick to help cut down on overeating.

You might initially laugh at the idea, thinking your brain is too smart to fall for that, but it's true. This deceptively simple strategy has been tried and tested. And proven!



## **Eat Protein**

In 2016, the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics published a report called "Increased Protein Consumption Linked to Feelings of Fullness."

This confirmed what many of us know from experience: that high-protein foods (such as chicken) make you feel fuller longer. Why? According to the lead researcher Richard Mattes, the protein appears to activate the release of satiety hormones.

## **Water**

Don't forget the appetite-taming value of water. A drink before a meal is a simple and easy appetite control strategy. Inexpensive, too. If you have a hard time drinking water, one option to get the liquid into your body is a vegetable broth.

It will fill you up but has few calories. Herbal tea is another effective alternative to straight water.

## **Foodless Foods That Can't Satisfy**

After we eat, we want to feel satisfied, right? Not hungrier! So, there are foods you'll want to avoid. Or at least, eat them in combination with satisfying foods that leave you feeling full.

These "foodless foods" are easy to identify because they don't have well-known satisfying ingredients in them. And those satiating ingredients are? Fats, fiber, and protein.

Take fruit juice for example. It's got plenty of goodness but pretty much no fat and no protein. And it's the same with smoothies.

Cracker biscuits? They contain a little fiber but mostly it's carbs. They won't satisfy your hunger unless you add some healthy fats such as avocado or ricotta.

Salads are great, delivering you a good serving of healthy fiber. Salad is good for your health, but it will satisfy much longer if you add a chunk of protein like a serving of chickpeas, chicken, or salmon. Or a healthy fat - and again we think of the avocado.

So, what about yogurt? It has plenty of fat and protein, but fiber? Nope. The fact that you can swallow it without chewing tells you there's pretty much no fiber in it.

So, this won't satisfy for long. Add granola, nuts, or berries and it's a whole different story. Just check the amount of sugar it contains and choose yogurt with less.

### **Glycemic Index**

We've heard a lot about the glycemic index (GI) over recent years and it's a useful concept. High GI food is processed quickly and pushes your blood sugar up.

The trouble is that once your glucose levels go back down again after the spike, you're feeling hungry again. That food didn't satisfy. It's what we're calling foodless food.

*Examples of high GI foods include:*

- White bread
- Pasta and pizza (it's that white flour again)
- Sushi (not much fiber, not much protein)
- Boxed commercial cereals are often high Gi (but oatmeal isn't, and whole-grain cereals are good too).

### **High Protein Foods**

Would you like a list of foods that are high in protein?

- Beans and lentils
- Broccoli

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- Brussels sprouts
- Cottage cheese
- Ezekiel bread (made of sprouted grains and legumes, it has tons of protein and fiber)
- Greek yogurt (not "Greek-style" yogurt - but check the sugar content before you buy)
- Lean beef
- Lean chicken breast (or turkey)
- Milk (but not skim milk)
- Nuts and seeds (almonds, pistachios, cashews, pumpkin seeds, even peanuts)
- Oats (one of the healthiest grains around)
- Salmon, trout, or tuna
- Tofu (the firm kind is better)
- Whole eggs

# Conclusion

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**Only a few people all over the world have never dreamt of becoming a sports star. There is a long way from a dream to a reality that requires hard work, discipline, and talent.**

Nutrition is also part of the key to success. Sports nutrition is not the same as ordinary nutrition. Athletes need a high level of energy while undertaking different activities, so they need more nutrients.

A large amount of fluid is also lost throughout the game. One of the major problems athletes have to face is dehydration. Thirst and tiredness negatively influence our performance. In the world of sports, their impact is more intensely felt because they affect not only the athlete's performance but his life.

If you want to reach the top of the sports world and stay there, you ought to get the right nutrition. In addition, you need to drink enough water as well as have a balanced diet. This way you can make use of your energy in a very efficient way and have all the conditions set for the best performance.

With the right nutrition, you can best exploit your talent endurance and power. An athlete's diet should take into account a series of factors such as physical condition, age, size, and the particular sport that is envisaged.

It's not a very good idea to make yourself a decision regarding your diet. You'd better see a doctor for this purpose. You need a professional piece of advice about proper nutrition and diet.

The most important element in sports nutrition is water. Almost sixty percent of body weight is water. Fluids are being lost while exercising. The human body does not have the mechanism to produce water and store it.

This is why all the eliminated fluids must be replaced. Dehydration cannot be prevented otherwise. Athletes need to drink more than eight glasses of water a day.

Over-heating, as well as dehydration, can be faced if large amounts of liquids are swallowed before, throughout, and after all sorts of sports activities. Drinking liquids is also a means of boosting your energy.

A well-balanced diet is also necessary for sports nutrition. An adequate combination of calories gives you top performance energy. Fats, proteins, and carbohydrates are nutrients that your body needs while practicing different kinds of sports.

The most important source of energy is carbohydrates, providing sixty to seventy percent of the necessary number of calories. They can be found in bread, pasta, fruit, vegetables, or cereals. Carbohydrates contain sugar, which the body transforms into glucose.

It is glucose that provides the body with energy. It is therefore advisable to get as many carbohydrates as possible so that you have more energy. Alternatively, proteins or fats can be used as sources of energy.

## Sports Nutrition

It is easy to feed your body with proteins. They can be found in meat, poultry, eggs, fish, beans, dairy products, nuts, and other foods. Fifteen to twenty percent of the necessary calories per day are provided by proteins.

