

Fluids and Foods AFTER Training/Competition

The amount of food you consume immediately after exercise will vary according to the amount of time between your training or competition and your next scheduled meal or snack.

Post-exercise, nutrition provides:

- Energy and nutrients to replenish fuel stores;
- Rehydration for faster recovery;
- Building blocks for muscle building.

Targets:

- Carbohydrate to restore muscle glycogen;
- Protein to repair muscle damage;
- Nutrients to support health and a strong immune system.

Why?

- To replace lost fluid;
- To replenish fuel stores;
- To boost immune system;
- To improve strength and endurance at the next event.

For rapid glycogen replacement, consume fluid and carbohydrate-rich foods as soon as possible after exercise, preferably within 30 minutes. Carbohydrate consumed in the hours after exercise moves readily into muscles to replace glycogen. Eating carbohydrate immediately after exercise also helps the body's immune system recover faster.

AFTER exercise:

- Drink 1 1/2 L of fluid for every kg of body weight lost.
- Consume some salty fluids and food for electrolyte (sodium) replacement and better fluid retention.
- Aim for 1.5 g carbohydrate/kg body weight within 2 hours after exercise.
- Choose a carbohydrate food that has a high glycemic index*.
- Have some lean protein food.
- Avoid skipping meals. Be sure to eat your next regular meal (breakfast, lunch, or dinner) within 2 hours.

* For information about the glycemic index of food, refer to *Training Diet: Carbohydrate – Go Food*.

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Late night RECOVERY nutrition:

It is never too late to eat your recovery meal. After an evening training session or competition, have a carbohydrate-based meal such as cereal with milk and fruit or a lean meat sandwich with juice.

CONVERSION: 250 mL = 1 cup = 8 oz.

AFTER EXERCISE – Focus on Fluid, Carbohydrate, and Protein

After exercise, eat a snack immediately, followed by a balanced meal within 2 hours. Choose from all four food groups:

Vegetables and fruit	Grain products
Milk and alternatives	Meat and alternatives

Meal ideas – at home or on the go: Plan foods to carry with you or food outlets where you can buy part or all of a meal.

- Banana, juice, hot or cold cereal, milk
- Juice, English Muffin with an egg and ham
- Carrot sticks, fruit, lean meat sandwich or sub, milk, oatmeal cookie,
- Minestrone soup, vegetable juice, bagel, cheese
- Baked potato, chili, milk
- Applesauce, juice, pasta, vegetables and meat sauce, bread roll
- Bean burrito with vegetables, chocolate milk
- Fruit, vegetarian pizza, milk

Snack ideas: Pack snack items to have on hand. Some snacks can be part of your next meal.

- Fruit, cereal/cereal bar, milk/yogurt
- Tomato or fruit juice, pretzels
- Bagel, peanut butter, jam, chocolate milk
- Juice, yogurt, crackers or cookies
- Raw vegetables with hummus, milk
- Vegetable juice, canned beans and pita
- Fruit smoothie (fruit, milk, yogurt) and toast
- Fruit, sport or energy bar, chocolate milk

Snacks for backpack or car:

- Juice boxes or fruit cups
- Dried fruit, puree fruit cups
- Dry cereal
- Cereal, sport, or energy bars
- Crackers
- Tuna or beans in cans with pull-off tops
- Trail mix with cereal

Avoid bacterial contamination of meals and snacks. Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot. Bacteria reproduce quickly at room temperature.

Try recovery fluid and food in training to find out what is comfortable for you. Never try new food or drinks if you will be competing within the next 48 hours.

For information on planning your meals and snacks, see these CAC resources:

- For an overview of your nutrition needs during training, refer to *Training Diet: Everyday Eating*.
- For a list of examples of high carbohydrate foods, refer to *Energize with Carbohydrate!*
- To learn how to meet your fluid needs during exercise, review *Fluids for Athletes*.
- To create a meal plan for your training needs, see *From Training Diet to Meal Plans*.

<http://www.coach.ca/fluids-and-foods-after-training-competition-p154681>