

HOW MUCH TO EAT

WHY DOES IT MATTER HOW MUCH WE EAT? BREAKING DOWN COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

CALORIES VERSUS CONTENT

Athletes, especially growing ones, need to be eating. Often times, specific calorie counting is not necessary. Rather, looking at what type of food and how much of it you're eating is more important.

Instead of looking at how many calories your meal or snack is, you should be looking at how your meal is put together. If you're having a meal with 75% simple carbohydrates (potatoes, corn, and white bread) with only a small piece of meat, this may not have the amount of nutrients you need. Adding dark vegetables allows this to be a more well rounded meal. There is the possibility of more calories, but it will ultimately be a more nutrient rich dish - which your body needs!

HOW MUCH FOOD CAN OUR BODIES PROCESS AT ONE TIME?

Believe it or not, our bodies aren't able to process all the food we put into it at one time. The goal should be to fuel frequently in order to allow our bodies the best chance of getting everything out of the food we are consuming. More isn't always better!

- Carbohydrates: 45-65% of meals should be carbs - amount depending on when you're eating your meal
- Proteins: 20-30 grams of protein is all bodies are able to process at a time. 25-30% of your meals should consist of protein.
- Fats: 20-35% of meals should come from healthy fats.

To achieve this, you should fuel about every 4 hours. This doesn't always have to be a meal, but can also be a balanced snack.

PLANNING YOUR FUELING WHILE ON TAPER

While considering taper and resting before a big meet, often times a swimmer's appetite isn't considered with the decrease with intensity in the pool. While preparing for your race, you should pay attention to your own hunger cues. Making sure you aren't overstuffing yourself following a practice that was shortened or you had a decrease in total practice yardage.

When preparing the night before a competition, eat your meals as typically as you do while you're training. The goal should not be to eat a bowl of buttered noodles with no vegetables or protein if that's not what you eat on a daily basis. "Carb loading" is a myth that often leaves you out of energy on race day.

QUESTIONS?

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