

Basics About Nutrition

Carbohydrates (Carbs)

Complex carbs are what we call “the good carbs”. It digest slowly into the system, and it keeps the body feeling full for a longer time.

Examples:

Brown rice, whole wheat noodles, 100 % whole wheat bread, 100% whole grain bread, quinoa, oats, lentils, 100% rye bread, sweet potato, squash, pumpkins, beans, peas, vegetables, whole wheat tortillas, popcorn (grain), buckwheat, cucumber, low fat low sugar yogurt, celery, fiber-rich fruits.

Simple carbs are mostly known as “bad carbs”. It digests quicker into the system, but if eaten at the right time of day, can be beneficial as a quick energy source.

Examples: raw sugar, brown sugar, honey, corn syrup, maple syrup, white rice, regular noodles, white or enriched bread, rice cake, white or enriched tortillas, simple fruits, fruit juice, cake, candy, candy bar, soda, chocolate, cookies, jams, 2% or regular milk, most cereals, regular yogurt, white potato.

Protein

Animal source protein contain all essential amino acids needed by the body to function effectively. It is considered a complete protein.

Examples: Red meat from cows, bison, deer, chicken, turkey, quail, fish, eggs, milk, cheese, whey, lamb, goat, horse, pork, duck, seafood.

Soy is the only plant based complete protein.

Most plant based proteins are incomplete, missing one or more essential amino acids.

Examples: Nuts, soy, legumes, beans, soybeans, tofu, peanuts, lentils, seeds, hummus, and vegetables.

Fats

Saturated fats are the “bad fats”.

Examples: Red meat (such as those that are 85% leaner or less), whole milk, cheese, coconut oil, baked goods, bacon, pork, butter, lamb, sausage, cream cheese.

Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are the “good fats”.

Examples: fatty fish, avocado, nuts, chia seeds, extra virgin olive oil, ground flaxseed, dark chocolate, eggs, olives, tofu.

Eating smart

Before working out carbs are the ideal source of energy. The variable that will make a difference to what type of carbs to consume is when the workout takes place during your daily routine. If you workout early in the morning, the body will need a good amount of simple carbs, as it transforms in source of energy quicker than complex carbs. If you workout later in the day, then complex carbs throughout the day are a better choice.

After working out simple carbs are good to put back in the system.

A Protein source within 30 minutes of the completion of a workout will be absorbed faster by the muscles to repair and rebuild. Liquid protein or powder protein mixed with water are a good choice because it is easier to carry around and ready for consumption.

Carb load prior to competition

Carb load is basically consuming complex carbs 3-4 days prior to competition. This will replenish the glycogen storage. It does not mean eating a bunch of pasta on the night before. Eat about the same amount of food but make sure to eat more complex carbs for few days prior to competition.

Day of competition

Eat your normal breakfast with some complex carbs, protein, and fats. Pack to go some simple carbs. Rice cakes and chocolate are good because it does not feel heavy on the stomach. Eat simple carbs about 30 minutes prior to racing. Another good source of simple carbs, especially for longer events, are dextrose tablets with magnesium.

After each race, replenish your glycogen level with more simple carbs. By doing this, the body will have energy for the next race as the glycogen stores are being refueled. Gatorade is a good choice to replenish carbs and lost fluids.