

BigTime Sports Nutrition-During Exercise

Receiving nutrients during exercise, especially during endurance exercise is important to keeping fuel reserves full. When exercising more than 60-90 minutes, drinking a substantial amount of water is needed to replenish all the fluid that is lost from sweating. Food sources may also be needed to replenish all the carbohydrate losses that are used up as energy. Stamina can be significantly increased by eating 100-300 calories per hour of exercise. Examples of this might be:

- Six eight ounce glasses of a sports drink
- Four cups of sport drink and a banana
- Two cups of a sports drink plus a sports bar

If nothing will stay down when exercising, it is important to keep hydrated with plenty of water. Water is very easy on your stomach and essential during exercise. Eating during exercise is not easy for all athletes, and is something that will have to be practiced in order to find out what works on an individual basis.

There is only one way to know if you are getting enough fluids to replace the ones that are lost. Weigh yourself before and after exercise to see if weight is being maintained. If weight is lost during a workout, then there is not enough fluid replacement. It is important to note that fat isn't

being lost during a workout. The fat loss will come a few days after the exercise bout, not during the workout. Weight loss during the workout will come from water loss.

Sports bars are an interesting alternative to eating during exercise or immediately before the exercise. The so-called energy boost that is received from sugar is probably due to the 200-300 calories that come from eating the bar. These calories clearly fuel muscles better than the zero calories from no food. Sports bars, like other foods, are easily digestible for some and hard to digest for others. This again, will take a trial and error effort to see if it will or will not work.

Tournaments and day-long events pose a different situation for athletes. These competitions are grueling activities for the body to go through. Nutrition becomes even more important for events like this. When competing in events like these, it is not about getting a large number of calories, but getting enough calories of the right foods. For long-distance events, additional calories may also be needed during the activity. There will definitely be a need for water to replenish fluid loss and there may be a need for some food to try and help replace some lost energy through calories and help prevent the total loss of glucose stores.

Goals here are to maintain proper hydration and a normal blood sugar level. Considerations are to refuel after one event and at the same time fueling for the next one. Knowing from practice what your nutritional and hydrational needs are will make it easier to stay properly fueled. It also wouldn't hurt to have some snacks to help maintain glucose levels.

The main point to make here is that there are times when pre-exercise nutrition doesn't cut it. When planning a training diet, it is important to get the right foods for fueling your body. A car that runs on gasoline will not perform well if diesel is put into it. The body will not perform well if low-density energy foods are put into it, no matter how much is eaten. Same as a car will overheat and quit running if there is no fluid in the radiator, an athlete will overheat and quit performing if their fluid levels are low.

Finding the right foods, either days before or right before an activity can help psychologically as much as physiologically. If the mind thinks that they will help, then there is a good chance that it will. If there is a food that works, stick with it, and have it readily available at all times.

