

What to Eat Before Practices and Events

If you are exercising more than an hour, make sure to you eat prior to practice. The ideal pre-exercise meal should be rich in carbohydrates, include some protein and be well tolerated.

Benefits of eating before exercise:

- A carbohydrate rich meal or snack tops off glycogen stores and helps endurance exercisers perform longer.
- Including a small amount of protein in your pre-exercise meal helps build and repair muscle. Protein prior to exercise may also help reduce post-exercise soreness.
- Helps maintain concentration and focus.
- Helps ward off hunger.

3 to 4 hours before exercise:

- Oatmeal made with milk, nuts and raisins
- Whole wheat bagel with peanut butter and a glass of milk or soymilk
- Cereal with milk and a banana
- Yogurt, granola and fruit
- Turkey and cheese sandwich with a piece of fruit and a yogurt

30 to 60 minutes before practice or competition

- Fresh fruit such as a bananas, oranges, watermelon, peaches and/or
- Granola bar
- Sports drink or water

Avoid high fat foods like fried food or too many high fiber foods prior to exercise. These foods can be slow to digest and cause discomfort while you are exercising.

For athletes that have a hard time digesting food prior to exercise or those with a nervous stomach pre-competition, liquid meal replacements may be a better choice than solid food.

Use your practices to determine the foods, fluids and timing that work best for you. Stick to these “tried and true” foods during competition. Never try new foods on an event day.