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PROPER SPORTS NUTRITION BENEFITS

- OPTIMIZE GAINS FROM TRAINING
- ENHANCE RECOVERY
- REDUCED RISK OF INJURY AND

RECOVERY NUTRITION WITHIN 30 MINUTES

- CARBOHYDRATES (50-100 GRAMS)
- PROTEIN (15-30 GRAMS)
- WATER (16-32 OUNCES)

8 Rules of Sports Nutrition for Track and Field Athletes

There are basic rules with sports nutrition for track and field athletes based on caloric output and the requirements of the training regimen. Sports nutrition for track and field athletes is just as important as proper training. There are general guide lines and benefits for proper nutrition for all track and field events. However, different event groups in track and field have specific sports nutrition rules based on caloric output and physiological demands.

Sports Nutrition for Track and Field and Other Athletes

1. Eat breakfast immediately to combat staying in a catabolic state; eat protein and carbohydrates to fuel the recovery process and prepare the body for training later in the day (Davis, 2017).
2. Eating every few hours stops overeating and keeps blood sugar stable, which leads to less fat storage. Never skip a meal; athletes need consistent fuel.
3. Eat protein with every meal; consume approximately one gram of protein per pound of lean body weight.
4. Eat within 30 minutes of a workout to rapidly replenish the low glycogen stores in muscles and decrease the muscle protein breakdown.
5. Eat five servings of fruits and vegetables every day; they are an excellent source of vitamins, minerals, and fiber.
6. Drink at least one gallon of water per day to stay hydrated.
7. Avoid high fat, processed foods, and simple sugars; energy levels can become unstable and cause cravings.
8. Minimize caffeine: caffeine is a stimulant and can improve performance in some cases, and it also dehydrates.

Sports Nutrition Energy Sources

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are the primary energy source for athletes during moderate to high-intensity exercise.

Athletes Need Carbohydrates: if glycogen stores are depleted as a result of low carbohydrate intake, performance will be negatively affected.

Fats

The carbohydrate sources in the body must be depleted to use fat as a fuel, which only occurs in extremely long durations of exercise.

The Science of Fat Conversion: aerobic glycolysis can only metabolize glucose; the TCA cycle and electron transport chain can metabolize glucose and fats. Fatty acids must undergo beta-oxidation before they can enter the TCA cycle; beta-oxidation is a series of chemical reactions converting fatty acids into acetyl CoA and hydrogen. The TCA cycle will process fat in the same manner as glucose at this stage.

Protein

Proteins are generally not used for energy in track and field.

The Science of Protein Conversion: proteins can be utilized for energy production by converting amino acids into glucose or other intermediates to be processed by the TCA cycle.

Sports Nutrition for Track and Field Athletes

Athletes have various nutritional needs depending on the requirement of the specific training regimen and the energy required to complete the workout and recovery properly. There are basic sports nutrition for track and field athletes in different areas.

Sports Nutrition for Track and Field Athletes**Distance Runners****2-3 hours before practice or competition:**

16–20 ounces of water, lean meats, fruits, and nuts

1 hour before practice or competition:

5–10 ounces of water, low-fat granola bar

During practice or competition:

6 ounces of water per 20 minutes of activity

6 ounces of sports drink with electrolytes per hour

6 ounces of meal replacement for activities over 2 hours

Within 30 minutes of practice or competition:

Fruit, granola bar, bread

Up to 6 hours post-workout-competition (every 2–3 hours):

Lean meat, grilled fish, fruits, vegetables, bread, and dairy

At least 8 ounces of water per hour depending on climate conditions

Eat carbohydrate-rich foods such as potatoes, pastas, and grains that can be quickly digested.

Sports Nutrition for Track and Field Athletes**Sprinters, Hurdlers, and Jumpers****2-3 hours before practice or competition:**

16 ounces of milk or juice, beans, lean meats, fruits, and nuts

1 hour before practice or competition:

8 ounces of water, low-fat granola bar, fruit

During practice or competition:

8 ounces of water per 20 minutes of activity

8 ounces of sports drink with electrolytes per hour

Within 30 minutes post-practice or competition:

Fruit, granola bar, pretzels, bagels

Meal replacement with protein and carbohydrates

Up to 6 hours post-workout-competition (every 2 hours):

Lean meat, grilled fish, fruits, vegetables, bread, and dairy

At least 8 ounces of water per hour

Athletes need to balance caloric intake and energy expenditure to maintain or improve body composition.

Sports Nutrition for Track and Field Athletes**Throwers****2-3 hours before practice or competition:**

16 ounces of chocolate milk, beans, lean meats, fruits, and nuts

1 hour before practice or competition:

8 ounces of milk or protein shake, granola bar, fruit

During practice or competition:

8 ounces of water per 20 minutes of activity

8 ounces of sports drink with electrolytes per hour

Within 30 minutes post-practice or competition:

Fruit, granola bar, pretzels, bagels

16 ounces of meal replacement with protein and carbohydrates

Up to 6 hours post-workout-competition (every 2 hours):

Lean meat, grilled fish, fruits, vegetables, bread, and dairy

At least 8 ounces of water per hour

Achieve weight gain in throwers by eating more bread, fruit or nut-based desserts and higher fat dairy products.

Are your athletes eating right?

The sports nutrition for track and field athletes will vary based on the nutritional requirements of the specific training regimen. First, general principles of proper sports nutrition for track and field athletes will be reviewed, followed by tips and considerations for different event groups in track and field. Finally, sample food options that best fit the athletic lifestyle will be given.

Rules Sports Nutrition for Track and Field and Other Athletes

- Eat every two-three hours
- Eat protein and complex carbohydrates
- Stay hydrated with water
- Post work out nutrition with 30 minutes
- Never skip a meal, always keep snack items with you

Proper Sports Nutrition Benefits

- Optimize gains from training program
- Enhance recovery between workouts and events
- Achievement of ideal % body fat and weight
- A reduced risk of injury and illness
- Confidence in being well-prepared to face competition
- Consistency in achieving high level competition performances

Joseph Maxwell, an All-American shot putter at the University of Tennessee recently published [The Ultimate Supplement Guide for Track and Field](#)

Four Supplements for all Track and Field Events

#1 Multivitamin for overall health

#2 Melatonin for sleep

#3 Omega-3's for injury management

#4 Protein powder for muscle recovery and growth

Supplements and Supervision

All nutritional supplements should be taken with caution under the direction of the coach and trained medical professional.

To prevent the use of illegal performance enhancing substances educational programs need to be implemented.

Sports Nutrition for Track and Field Review

Athletes have nutritional needs depending on the requirements of the sport. The guidelines for sports nutrition for track and field athletes focus on proper eating habits based on energy consumption. Different event groups in track and field will have different requirements based on caloric output. Sports nutrition supplements are another consideration for not just track and field athletes, but all athletes, especially if an athlete can't get all of their nutritional needs from food alone.

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