

PERFORMANCE NUTRITION: ROWING

THE PERFORMANCE INSTITUTE, INC.

Fuel for Rowers



Rowing, a high-energy sport requires athletes to train for power, endurance and technique. It relies heavily on **carbohydrates** to fuel the energy system to train and compete.

When the collegiate athlete is still growing, adding muscle, training and playing hard, the requirement for carbohydrate is very high.

A low carbohydrate / low energy diet will result in depletion of the essential energy stores which leads to increased fatigue, low performance and poor recovery—particularly important on multiple-event days.

Choosing low-fat, and nutritious carbohydrate

Pre-Event Eating

The goals of the pre-event meal are to:

Top up your energy stores to ensure plenty for competition.

Leave you feeling neither too hungry nor too full.

Ensure full hydration.

The pre-event evening meal is critical since

foods in the correct amounts for your body and your sport, will provide the energy you need, and keep your body weight where it should be.

Carbohydrate choices need to be balanced with low fat, high protein choices: (lean meat - turkey, chicken, pork, ham; fish; eggs; milk, etc.)

High Carbohydrate Food Choices

Breakfast: Cereal, pancakes, waffles, toast, bagel, oatmeal, grits, orange juice, fruit

Eating Before Morning Practice: Fig bars and low-fat milk, applesauce and Graham crackers, oatmeal, banana and peanut butter, instant breakfast, toast and juice.

Lunch: Low fat sandwiches made with bread or rolls. Choose turkey, ham or roast beef. Pasta

many races take place early morning and don't allow time for a large meal prior.

Choose high carbohydrate, low fat meals to ensure adequate digestion, and sufficient energy.

Examples: Cereals with low-fat milk, fruit, toast and juice; pancakes,

with low-fat topping/sauce. Salads, fruit.

Dinner: Potatoes, pasta, rice. Vegetables, salad, fruit. Low fat frozen yogurt.

Snacks: Pretzels, fruit, yogurt, energy bars, cereal, Gatorade

Hydration

Sweat losses can be great in rowing. Failure to replace these losses, or to maintain hydration will affect performance, and may negatively impact health. Thirst is not a good indicator of fluid needs, therefore rowers must drink on a schedule.

- Carry a water bottle
- Drink habitually
- 2 cups, 2 hours before practice
- 1-2 cups 15 mins. before
- 1/2-1 cup every 15 mins. during (alternate between water and sports drink)
- 3 cups after practice for every pound lost
- Drink water with meals

syrup and fruit; baked potatoes with low fat fillings; pasta with low fat sauces; sandwiches.

If you have an early morning race, have a high carbohydrate meal the night before (e.g. stir fry, pasta), and a snack 1-2 hours before the race (instant breakfast, cereal and milk, toast).

Recovery

- Recovery strategies are important to help repair your body after training / competition, and to ready your body for the next event or practice.
- Intentional recovery is essential between heats (e.g. regattas) to prevent fatigue and burnout.
- The 20 minutes after completion of training / competing is a critical period for recovery to consume a high carbohydrate snack or drink and include small amounts of protein.
- Use recovery drinks or shakes, energy bars, dried and fresh fruit, yogurt and peanut butter.
- Be sure to consume a high carbohydrate post-game meal with lean protein and limit the fried foods.
- Continue to drink water and other fluids (not sodas) to replace that lost during your activity.
- Your urine should be colorless if you are adequately hydrated.
- Obtain 7-8 hours sleep each night.