

PERFORMANCE NUTRITION: SOCCER

THE PERFORMANCE INSTITUTE, INC.

Fuel for Soccer Players



The sport of soccer has very high energy needs.

Carbohydrate is your primary source of energy.

A low carbohydrate diet will result in fatigue and poor performance.

Skipping meals, and timing meals poorly will result in poor performance.

If you choose low-fat, and nutritious carbohydrate foods in the correct amounts for your body and your sport, you will have 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

High Carbohydrate Food Choices

Breakfast

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

Lunch

Low fat sandwiches made with bread or rolls. Choose turkey, ham or roast beef. Pasta with low-fat topping/sauce. Salads, fruit.

Dinner

Lean meat (turkey, chicken, pork) or fish. Potatoes, pasta, rice. Vegetables, salad, fruit. Low fat frozen yogurt.

Snacks

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

Pre-Match Eating

The goals of the pre-match meal are to:

Top up your energy stores to ensure plenty for competition.

Leave you feeling neither too hungry nor too full.

Be fully hydrated.

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

Examples: Cereals with low-fat milk, fruit, toast and juice; pancakes, syrup and fruit; baked potatoes with low fat fillings; pasta with low fat sauces.

Hydration

Sweat losses can be great during practice or a game. Failure to replace these losses, or to maintain hydration will affect performance, and may negatively impact a player's health. Thirst is not a good indicator of fluid needs, therefore soccer players must drink on a schedule.

Pre-game: 20 oz fluid (carry a water bottle everywhere and use it)

During Game: 4-8 oz every 15 minutes or more often if time permits. Alternate between water and Gatorade.

Half-Time: 20 oz—Gatorade and water.

Post-Game: at least 20 oz after game (not including recovery drink)

Before Bed: continue to drink water until bedtime.



Recovery

- Recovery strategies are important to help repair your body after training / competition, and to ready your body for the next match or training session.
- The 20 minutes after completion of training / match is a critical period for recovery.
- Consume a high carbohydrate snack or drink and include small amounts of protein.
- Use recovery drinks or shakes, or energy bars, fruit, yogurt and peanut butter can be useful.
- 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.