

Nutrition guide for swimmers + parents

A Swimmers diet.

‘Nutrition is the cornerstone of every athletes performance’

Carbohydrates make up one half of a swimmers diet, it is the fuel they need to get through tough training sessions and competition. Carbohydrates are stored as glycogen in the muscles and is the fuel we use throughout the day especially during training.

The other half should be made up of-

Proteins- Lean meat, fish, eggs, low-fat dairy

Healthy fats- Fish, Avocado, Olive oil, Seeds, Nuts

Vegetables

Fruit

Whole grains

Nutrition for after training

Recovery between training sessions is essential to get the most from the intense training regime that swimmers go through.

The three essential factors in recovery between training are Refuelling, Rebuilding and Rehydrating.

Refuelling- Replenishing carbohydrate stores

Rebuilding- Building new muscle cells

Rehydrating- Replacing fluid and electrolytes lost in sweat

Optimal recovery enhances the adaption process which means the body becomes fitter, stronger and faster. It also helps the immune system deal with the stresses of regular training.

Refuelling- The main fuel used for training is carbohydrates which the body converts to muscle glycogen. Low glycogen stores in the body will cause fatigue and decreased power and endurance.

Rebuilding- Eating protein after training is important for muscle growth and repair, this is most effective when consumed within 1 hour of the training session!

Rehydrating- Without realising it swimmers will sweat a lot during training! It is important to replenish fluids lost during training or the refuelling, rebuilding and adaption process cannot work properly.

Some good examples of foods for recovery are-

Low fat milkshake

Fruit smoothies made with milk of yoghurt

Milk and cereal bar

Greek yoghurt and fruit or granola

Scrambled egg on toast

Tuna sandwich

Sports recovery drink

Sports recovery bar

Competition Nutrition

Day before competition- To optimise performance on race day it is recommended swimmers eat little and often in the day before and avoid big meals.

Some good examples are-

Oatmeal
Brown Rice
Sweet potatoes
Whole wheat bread + Pasta
Apples
Bananas
Blueberries

Competition day- Swimmers should eat something before arriving at a competition no matter how early and not running on empty, for those who struggle to eat due to nerves then try liquids like milkshake or juice.

Throughout the day in between races swimmers will need to refuel, high fats and simple sugars such as sweets and chocolate will only hinder performance.

Some good examples of food to consume during the competition are-

Pasta Salad
Simple Sandwiches- Chicken, tuna or cheese with lettuce.
Bananas
Apples
Dried Fruit
Cereal bars
Yogurt
Small milkshake
Sports recovery drink
Sports recovery bar