

## **Pre-game Meals**

- Planning of pre-game meals to optimize performance should take a center stage.
- Dehydration is a performance buster. Weight loss of 2-3% of body weight can negatively impact performance. This is equal to a weight loss of about 3.5 pounds for an athlete weighing 180 pounds. So the day of the game, athletes should begin drinking starting about 4 hours prior to competition.
- According to The American College of Sports Medicine and the American Dietetic Association's Position Paper on Nutrition and Athletic Performance, the amount of recommended fluid would vary depending on the age
- Pre-game jitter/nervousness is common and the hormones that gives "butterflies" in stomach also make the food leave your stomach slowly. For this reason, pre-game meals should focus on the two most important components of a good sports nutrition plan
  - carbohydrate
  - fluid
- Before exercise or competition, the meal should ideally be focused on hydration, be somewhat lower in fat and fiber to avoid stomach distention or diarrhea.

### **When to Eat:**

#### **1 to 4 hours before training or competition:**

- Allows enough time for food to empty the stomach.
- Exercising with a nearly full stomach can cause indigestion, nausea, and vomiting

### **How much to eat:**

The size of the meal should be adjusted depending on timing: reduce the carbohydrate and calorie content of the meal the closer it is consumed to exercise:

- 4 hours before exercise: a large meal (700 to 800 calories)
- 1 hour before exercise: a small meal (300 to 400 calories)

### **Foods to Eat:**

- A sub type sandwich made with a lean meat, lettuce and tomato, little to no mayo, pretzels, apple slices and lemonade
- Pasta with grilled chicken and marinara sauce, green beans, fruit salad and low fat milk

## **Foods to Avoid:**

- Fatty foods, such as many popular breakfast foods (bacon, sausage and cheese). The reason: they slow emptying of stomach, which may make your child feel sluggish and heavy.
- High-fiber foods, especially bran. They can cause stomach cramps and the need for a bathroom break during exercise;
- Gas-forming foods, such as beans and onions.
- Extremely salty foods (bacon and sausage) that can cause your child to retain fluids and feel bloated.
- Untested foods or fluids because they could result in severe indigestion and impaired performance.
- Greasy foods such as pizza, lasagna and sandwiches with high fat meat, cheese and mayo can cause nausea

## **What to Drink:**

- Sports drinks
- Commercially formulated liquid meals (Gatorpro or Sustacal etc.). Their fluid and carbohydrate content make them a desirable meal choice before competition or during day-long competitions (swim and track meets, tennis, volleyball and wrestling tournaments).
- Homemade liquid meals (mix 1% nonfat milk, fruit and nonfat dry milk powder - or "instant breakfast" powders - in a blender; for variety add cereal, yogurt, and vanilla or chocolate flavoring; add sugar or honey for additional sweetness and carbohydrate.

## **What Not To Drink:**

Caffeinated beverages because caffeine is a diuretic, contributing to dehydration and reduced endurance in hot weather

- coffee
- tea
- some sodas
- energy drinks

As that can cause:

- agitation
- nausea

- muscle tremors
- palpitations
- headaches

## **During the Event:**

### ➤ **Eating**

- Stay away from eating during your event because one should have an empty stomach while playing a sport or doing any type of physical activity

### ➤ **Hydration**

- One should stay hydrated during your event.
- For each pound lost during an activity one should drink an additional 16 ounces of water.
- When you're thirsty, drink. It's important to replenish the body with liquid while you're sweating and losing that hydration.

## **After the Event:**

### ➤ **Eating**

- Consume a good mixture of healthy carbohydrates, low-fat proteins and healthy fats keeping in mind other activities or games coming up

### ➤ **Hydration**

- Again, you need to re-hydrate your body from your physical activity.
- This helps muscles, skin and overall health to ensure that you stay strong and energized.