



# **10 RULES FOR EATING LIKE AN ATHLETE**

## **1. Eat high-performance foods every 2-4 hours**

- This will provide a consistent source of energy to keep your metabolism and energy even & at maximum level.
- This also helps you from getting too hungry which can lead to making poor choices or overeating.

## **2. Eat high-performance foods before practices and competitions**

- This provides quality fuel for energy.
- Pre-workout foods should be high in carbohydrates.
- Choices should be moderate-low in protein and fiber and low in fat.
- A full meal 3-4 hours before your workout/competition and a snack about 1 hour before is the goal.
- Choose something easy to digest that you are familiar with and will not upset your stomach.

## **3. Eat high-performance foods after practices and competitions**

- This replaces energy stores & maximizes muscle building/repair.
- Complex carbs and lean protein are essential:
  - 0.5g of carbs and 0.1g of protein per pound of body weight
- A full meal should be eaten within 15-60 minutes. If you cannot get a full meal in that period, it is essential to get a high-quality recovery snack in as soon as possible.

## **4. Eat a high-performance breakfast**

- This breaks the overnight fasting state & provides you with the energy to begin your day. Eating a high-performance breakfast sets the nutrition tone for the rest of your day.
- Eating breakfast can help you feel more alert and prevent you from feeling too hungry later in the day.

## **5. Last meal 3-4 hours before bed**

- Going to bed while you are still digesting your food disrupts your sleep & inhibits your body's repair work.
- You can snack on smaller amounts of high-quality foods before going to bed; for example, fruits, vegetables, 1 granola bar, etc.

## **6. Fuel right for game and competition days**

- Make smart choices on days you will be playing/competing. This is the time to focus on eating only high-performance foods and following the pre- and post- rules.

## **7. Eat foods from all the food groups**

- All food groups are important for a balanced high-performance diet. Make sure you get high-performance carbohydrates, proteins, fats, fruits, veggies and dairy (if tolerated) every day.
- Try to get as many food groups as possible at every meal and snack.

## **8. Hydrate**

- Keeping properly hydrated is essential to performance. Your body cannot function at peak level if you are low on fluids.
- You should drink mostly water all day long, sports drinks are only needed during or after very intense or very sweaty exercise.
- Post-exercise you should drink 16-24oz/pound lost during the workout.
- Thirst is not a good indicator of hydration. If you wait until you are thirsty you may already be dehydrated.
- Urine should be pale yellow & you should be going to the bathroom every 2-3 hours.

## **9. Plan ahead**

- Know what is going on in your day and pack food accordingly, don't put yourself in a position to have to use a vending machine or stop at a fast food restaurant.
- Keep quality foods on hand. Go grocery shopping regularly.

## **10. Listen to your body**

- Learn to tell when you are hungry and when you are full. Eat when you first start to feel a little hungry and stop before you feel full.
- Follow the "4-6" rule.

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