



ELITE SPORTS NUTRITION PRINCIPLES FOR PEAK PERFORMANCE

WHY NUTRITION IS IMPORTANT FOR ATHLETES

While a high-quality strength and conditioning program is essential for an athlete, just as essential is a sound nutritional game plan. Training and nutrition should go hand in hand, like peanut butter and jelly. When an athlete's diet is overlooked they will see a drop off in performance and recovery, as well increase their chances for injury and sickness.

Thus, nutrition becomes the missing piece of the puzzle for athletes. At Elite Sports Performance, we take a holistic approach and believe an athlete should not only have their diet dialed in to improve athletic performance, but to also improve health. Incorporating a sound nutritional strategy can ensure the following for an athlete:

- Provide the athlete with the proper fuel to perform optimally during practice, games, and off-season training (help the athlete go harder, longer).
- Provide the athlete with proper nutrients to optimize recovery post-training, practice, and games.
- Help prevent injuries and sickness during a grueling season
- Help the athlete healthily maintain, gain, or lose weight effectively
- Improve overall health and well-being

THE BOTTOM LINE: IF YOU ARE NOT FOLLOWING AN EFFECTIVE NUTRITIONAL GAME PLAN, THEN YOU ARE NOT PERFORMING AT YOUR OPTIMAL LEVEL AS WELL AS LIMITING YOUR ABILITY TO REACH YOUR FULL POTENTIAL.



THE ELITE EIGHT ESSENTIALS TO NUTRITION

A good nutritional strategy should not only elevate athletic performance, but it should also lead to greater overall health. By following the “Elite Eight”, you will ensure peak performance as improve overall health and sense of well-being. These eight keys are not only designed to improve your diet and health, but they are designed to be practical.

1. EAT LIKE A CAVEMAN

When it comes to making food selections, only choose foods that a caveman could have eaten in his time. Cavemen only had access to natural and nutrient dense foods. These foods are very nourishing to the body and lead to improved health and performance.

What cavemen did not have access to was the manmade processed “junk” that exists today. These manmade foods are stripped of many of their nutrients during their processing and have a negative impact on your health and performance.

NATURAL FOOD	PROCESSED FOOD
NATURAL RAW FRUITS SUCH AS ORANGES, APPLES, BANANAS, GRAPES, ETC	PROCESSED FRUITS SUCH AS FRUIT CUPS, CANNED FRUIT, FRUIT JUICES, APPLE SAUCE ETC
NATURAL MEATS SUCH AS CHICKEN, BEEF, FISH, LAMB, PORK, ETC	PROCESSED MEATS SUCH AS CHICKEN LUNCH MEAT
RAW NUTS AND NUT BUTTERS SUCH AS WALNUTS, ALMOND, PEANUTS, ALMOND BUTTER, PEANUT BUTTER	ALL FAST FOOD AND PRE-PACKAGED MEALS SUCH AS TV DINNERS, FROZEN MEALS, ETC.
SEEDS AND SEED BUTTERS SUCH AS PUMPKIN SEEDS, SUNFLOWER SEEDS, SUNFLOWER BUTTER, ETC	MOST FOODS IN BAGS AND BOXES SUCH AS CRACKERS, CHIPS, COOKIES, DOUGHNUTS, ETC
ALL VEGETABLES	SUGARY BEVERAGES SUCH AS SODA, KOOL-AID, ETC
NATURAL GRAINS SUCH AS OATMEAL, QUINOA, WILD RICE, BROWN RICE	
ALL TYPES OF BEANS, LENTILS, PEAS	



2. EAT A WIDE VARIETY OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Fruits and vegetables contain essential vitamins, minerals, anti-oxidants, as well as a host of other beneficial nutrients. Because athletes are so active, they have higher requirements for vitamins and minerals, thus making fruits and vegetables essential. Make sure to include fruits, vegetables, or both with every meal. When choosing fruits and vegetables, choose a wide variety of colors to ensure you are consuming a large variety.

3. CONSUME A HIGH PROTEIN DIET

Due to the active nature of sports, athletes are constantly breaking down their muscle and are in need of the proper nutrients to help repair, rebuild, and recover. Protein, the building block of muscle, are one of the main nutrients responsible for this repair and rebuilding process. Because athletes need to be able to fully recover from their sports and training, they have higher protein requirements than the average person. To ensure an athlete is consuming adequate protein, we recommend you consume a serving of protein (~30-50g) with every meal.

With that said, not all proteins are created equal. Good sources of protein contain all 9 essential amino acids (building blocks of proteins). These amino acids are essential because the body cannot create them, thus we must get them from our diet.

COMPLETE PROTEIN SOURCES

- MEATS SUCH AS CHICKEN, BEEF, PORK, FISH
- EGGS
- GREEK YOGURT
- COTTAGE CHEESE
- PROTEIN POWDERS



4. CONSUME HEALING FATS DAILY

The days of “low fat” diets are a thing of the past. This outdated approach was grossly wrong for several reasons. Dietary fats serve many purposes for the body and are essential for optimum health as well as performance. Because of this, athletes should not be “scared” to consume fats. With that said, there is one type of fat that is toxic to the body; trans fats. These types of fats are manmade and help extend the shelf life of processed foods. These types of foods should be avoided at all costs.

However, similar to proteins, not all fats are created equal. Unhealthy fats can have a negative impact on your health by increasing inflammation, increasing bad cholesterol (VLDL), and increasing fat storage. Rather, we recommend athletes consume fats that have a healing effect on the body. These types of fats have the opposite effect on the body as the unhealthy fats. They improve our health by decreasing inflammation, improving cholesterol levels, and increase burning of fat for energy.

HEALING FATS	UNHEALTHY FATS
EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL	ANYTHING DEEP FRIED (CONTAINS TRANS FATS)
EXTRA VIRGIN COCONUT OIL	CHIPS
NUTS (PEANUTS, ALMONDS, WALNUTS, PISTACHIOS, ETC)	VEGETABLE OILS
SEEDS (PUMPKIN, SUNFLOWER, ETC)	FAST FOOD (CONTAINS TRANS FATS)
AVOCADO	COOKIES, CAKES, DOUGHNUTS
EGGS	
FISH (ESPECIALLY SALMON) AND FISH OIL	



5. CONSUME THE RIGHT CARBOHYDRATES AT THE RIGHT TIME

Carbohydrates are used by the body for explosive movements (sprinting, jumping, etc.) and are the main fuel source for high intensity sports such as football, basketball, wrestling, track, baseball. Because of this, it is important that athletes consume adequate amounts of carbohydrates to perform optimally during these activities. So be sure that on the days that you are active (IE practices, games, strength training sessions, etc.) you are consuming lots of carbohydrates to fuel your performance as well as to help recover after your exercise activities.

Athletes who are looking to add lean muscle mass or body weight can also benefit from consuming lots of carbohydrates throughout the day and should aim to load up during and after exercise as carbohydrates help to increase muscle building.

You also benefit more from eating certain carbohydrates at certain times. You prefer faster digesting carbohydrates during any exercise activity as well as directly after. Faster digesting carbohydrates get to the muscle faster to allow them to do their job quicker – provide fuel during exercise, and help with recovery post-exercise.

The best and easiest way to consume fast digesting carbohydrates during an exercise activity is through liquid form. I recommend a “training shake” consisting of dextrose (fast digesting carbohydrate) along with some protein (either whey protein or BCAA’s). This serves to provide the athlete with fast digesting carbohydrates for fuel, protein for recovery, and water for hydration.

Good carbohydrate sources include:

- Vegetables and Fruits
- Rice
- Quinoa
- Potatoes (white and sweet)
- Rolled Oats
- Beans/Lentils/Legumes



6. DRINK HYDRATING BEVERAGES EARLY AND OFTEN

One of the most underrated and often overlooked aspects of sports nutrition is an athlete's hydration level. It is proven that exercise performance is impaired when an athlete is dehydrated by as little as 2% of body weight. Because of this, it is important that athletes make a conscious effort to be consuming fluids all throughout the day. If the athlete waits until they become thirsty it is already too late. It will be a helpful reminder for the athlete to always have a water bottle/canteen on them and make that conscious effort to drink it throughout the day. It is also wise for athletes to consume proper beverages and to avoid unhealthy choices.

HEALTHY & HYDRATING BEVERAGES	UNHEALTHY BEVERAGES
WATER (REGULAR OR ADD LEMON FOR FLAVOR)	SODAS
ANY TYPE OF TEA (UNSWEETENED)	FRUIT JUICES (UNLESS AROUND WORKOUT PERIOD)
	SPORTS DRINKS (UNLESS AROUND WORKOUT PERIOD)
	ENERGY DRINKS

7. EMPLOY NUTRIENT TIMING FOR PEAK PERFORMANCE

Nutrient Timing is defined as consuming certain types of foods at specific times during the day to receive optimal results. This is important for athletes because the body needs and will utilize certain foods differently during their exercise period (pre, during, and post-exercise).

Nutrient timing is one of the newer concepts in the scientific community and studies show that it works. Rather than knowing just WHAT to eat, we are now determining WHEN to eat specific foods. If an athlete follows a proper nutrient timing system, they will see both improved performance as well as improved recovery. To keep it simple, athletes should look to consume fast digesting carbohydrates as well as fast digesting protein directly before, during, and after their sporting event (games, practice, etc) as well as their strength training sessions.



8. CONSUME ONLY THE ESSENTIAL SUPPLEMENTS

With the popularity of supplements these days, making it a billion-dollar industry, the truth is the majority of supplements are overhyped “crap”. While many individuals in the supplement industry have become expert marketers, they have yet to become experts in creating authentic and quality supplements that back up their claims.

With that said, there are definitely some quality supplements that athletes (as well as non-athletes) can benefit from. At Elite Sports Performance, we take a holistic approach and recommend athletes not only take certain supplements to improve athletic performance, but to also improve health and well-being. Below are a few supplements worth looking into.

ESSENTIAL SUPPLEMENTS
Multi-Vitamin
Fish Oil
Probiotic
Protein Powder
Carbohydrate Powder
Creatine Monohydrate
Greens Formula



2-DAY SAMPLE DIET

Meal	Day 1	Day 2
Breakfast	Omelet (3-4 eggs, onions, peppers, tomatoes), 1 orange, 1.5 cup whole milk, multivitamin, and fish oil	Oatmeal (1 cup rolled oats (cooked) mixed with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup blue berries, 2 Tbsp all natural peanut butter, and 1 scoop whey protein powder), 1 cup of whole milk
Snack	1 apple and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of raw almonds	1 banana and 1 protein shake
Lunch	Chicken salad (baby romaine lettuce, diced chicken, grape tomatoes, 1/8 cup raw sunflower seeds, extra virgin olive oil, and balsamic vinegar), 1 banana, 1 cup of whole milk	Tuna pasta salad (2 cups pasta (cooked), 1 can of tuna, diced tomatoes, olives, carrots, and extra virgin olive oil), celery w/ peanut butter (2 Tbsp)
Pre-Workout	1 banana and 1 protein shake	Grapes (1 cup) and 1 protein shake
Workout	Workout Shake (whey protein + carbohydrate powder)	Workout Shake (whey protein + carbohydrate powder)
Post-Workout	Post-workout Shake (whey protein + carbohydrate powder)	Post-workout Shake (whey protein + carbohydrate powder)
Dinner	Pork chops (grilled), baked sweet potato with butter, sautéed vegetables (mushrooms, onions, asparagus), 1 cup whole milk	2 Hamburgers (90% lean ground beef) on Ezekiel bread with lettuce and tomato, sautéed asparagus, side salad (baby spinach, grape tomatoes, 1/8 cup raw sunflower seeds, extra virgin olive oil, and balsamic vinegar), 1 cup whole milk
Snack	Cottage cheese (1.5 cups) with strawberries (1/2 cup)	Apple with almond butter (2 Tbsp)

The above diet follows the “Elite Eight” and will ensure optimal performance, recovery, and health for the athlete. While this is more of a generic diet sample, at Elite Sports Performance we don’t believe in “cookie cutter” diets, but rather individualizing a diet for our athletes. We tailor make nutritional strategies for athletes based on their goals and take into account several factors (sport(s) they participate in, current health/physique, as well as food likes/dislikes to name a few).