



Nutrition for Athletes

This packet highlights and explains each of the 5 nutrition goals promoted at Forsyth Central. Follow these guidelines to stay energized during exercise, enhance recovery between workouts, and maintain a healthy body composition.

5 Nutrition Habits of Champions

- 1). Hydrate
- 2). Refuel
- 3). Eat at Regular Intervals
- 4). Choose a Varied and Balanced Diet
- 5). Meet Your Energy Needs

Daily Checklist

Complete this checklist daily to ensure you are achieving optimal nutrition

_____ I ate breakfast

_____ I ate 3 balanced meals

_____ I ate 2-3 nutritious snacks

_____ I ate 2-3 pieces of fruit

_____ I ate 3-5 servings of vegetables

_____ I ate 3-4 servings of low-fat dairy products

_____ I ate a lean source of protein in each meal

_____ I ate a source of carbohydrates in meals and snacks

_____ I selected foods moderate or low in fat

_____ I drank water regularly throughout the day

_____ I drank Powerade during intense conditioning

_____ I refueled within 60 minutes following workouts

_____ I took a multivitamin

5 Nutrition Habits of Champions

1). **HYDRATE**

Dehydration

- Raises your body temperature
- Makes you work harder at lower exercise intensities
- Causes headache, dizziness, and fatigue
- Leads to muscle cramping

Stay Hydrated

- Drink at least 1 cup of water every hour

TIP: Carry a water bottle around with you for a reminder

- Drink 1-2 cups of Powerade about 15 minutes before exercise
- Drink 1-2 cups of fluid every half hour during exercise

TIP: Select Powerade over water if you are a salty sweater or exercising for longer than an hour

- Drink 3 cups of Powerade after exercise

TIP: Add 2 more cups of water or Powerade for each pound lost during exercise

Monitor Hydration

Urine color - Clear to pale yellow color and frequent need to urinate signal adequate hydration. Infrequent, dark urine reflects your body begging you to drink.

Weight loss - Weighing yourself before and after practice allows you to estimate fluids lost in sweat. Replace each pound with 2 cups of fluid.

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2). **REFUEL (Chocolate Milk is GREAT)**

Purpose

- 1). To replace carbohydrates used for energy and build stores for the next workout
- 2). To provide protein for aid in muscle repair and to prevent muscle breakdown
- 3). To take the first step in recovery for your next workout

Timing

The critical time to refuel is within the first **30 minutes** after exercise, when your body is able to maximize absorption of carbohydrates and protein.

Nutrients

Water: at least 3 cups of fluid plus an additional 2 cups for each pound of weight loss

Carbohydrates: 50-100 grams

Protein: 15-25 grams

Recommended Food Combinations

- 2 cups of low-fat chocolate milk and a banana
- Peanut butter and jelly sandwich and 2 cups of Powerade
- Bagel and part-skim mozzarella string cheese
- 8 oz. of low-fat yogurt mixed with 1/2 cup granola cereal
- 2 cups of cereal with skim or 1% milk

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3). EAT AT REGULAR INTERVALS

Purpose

- 1). To maintain blood sugar levels for constant energy throughout the day
- 2). To minimize overwhelming hunger that leads to overeating late at night
- 3). To encourage protein synthesis instead of fat storage

Recommendations

Aim for 3-4 balanced meals daily

- Begin your day with a meal, even if it is not a traditional breakfast
- Regardless of your work or class schedule, make sure to include a lunch

This may require packing food ahead of time

- Prepare or purchase a dinner that is about the same size as breakfast and lunch
- For weight gain, eating a fourth meal will help you to consume more calories
- Starving all day and binging at night will sabotage both weight loss and weight gain efforts

Aim for 2-4 snacks daily

- Including a small snack in between meals will control your hunger
- Adding large snacks will help increase calories needed for weight gain
- Eating a high-carbohydrate snack pre-workout will provide quick energy
- Refueling after exercise is an essential snack for all athletes.

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4). CHOOSE A VARIED AND BALANCED DIET

Follow these three steps to ensure you reach nutrient recommendations.

Step 1: Eat antioxidant-rich fruits and vegetables

Goals

- 1). Aim for 2-3 pieces of fruit per day
- 2). Aim for 3-5 servings of vegetables per day
1 serving is 1 cup raw or 1/2 cup cooked veggies

Examples

- fresh fruit, frozen fruit, canned fruit in water or juice, 100% fruit juice, dried fruit
- fresh vegetables, frozen vegetables, canned vegetables, 100% vegetable juice

Step 2: Eat energy-supplying carbohydrates

Goals

- 1). At least half of your calories should come from carbohydrates
- 2). Include a source of carbohydrates in every meal and snack

Examples

- whole grain bread, cereal, pasta, rice, oats
- starchy vegetables such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, winter squash, corn
- limit empty calories such as soda, sweet tea, candy, and sugary desserts

Step 3: Eat muscle-building, lean protein sources

Goals

- 1). Up to 1/4 of your calories may come from protein
- 2). Include a source of lean protein in every meal

Examples

- chicken breast, sirloin steak, lean ground beef, fish, egg whites, beans
- low-fat dairy products such as skim milk, low-fat yogurt, and 2% cheese.

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5). MEET YOUR ENERGY NEEDS

Match your food intake to your body composition goals.

- Increase total calories to gain lean muscle mass
- Decrease total calories to shed excess body fat
- Maintain total calories to avoid weight gain or loss

Six sample meal plans have been provided at varying energy levels to guide your food choices. If no beverage is listed with food items, select water, crystal light, or unsweetened iced tea. Diet soda may be consumed in moderation because it has been shown to cause sugar cravings in some individuals.

Your specific needs and food preferences may differ from those provided, so please schedule a nutrition consultation to receive individualized recommendations.

If you fail to reach all of your vitamin and mineral requirements on a daily basis, it is also recommended that you take a general multivitamin.

Sample Meal Plans

4000 CALORIE DIET

Appropriate for most male athletes involved in sports such as football, basketball, track as well as some from baseball, tennis, cross-country, and swimming.

Breakfast 1 cup of granola cereal mixed with 1 cup of strawberries and 1 cup of 2% milk
1 cup of 100% orange juice

Morning Snack Peanut butter and jelly sandwich on 2 slices of whole wheat bread

Lunch 1 baked chicken breast with 2 cups of rice

1/2 cup of peas and 1/2 cup of corn

1 cup of 2% milk

Afternoon Snack 12 baby carrots dipped in low-fat ranch dressing

1 small bowl of pretzels

Dinner 3 beef soft tacos topped with shredded cheese, tomatoes, onion, lettuce, and thick-and-chunky salsa

Evening Snack 1 medium apple dipped in 6 oz. of low-fat yogurt

During Practice Approximately 6 cups of Powerade

5000 CALORIE DIET

Appropriate for high weight football players as well as basketball or football players trying to gain weight.

Breakfast 3 large scrambled eggs

2 slices whole wheat toast topped with 2 tsp margarine and 2 Tbsp jelly

1 cup of 100% apple juice

Morning Snack 1 medium orange

1 whole wheat bagel topped with 2 Tbsp of natural peanut butter

Lunch 1 chicken breast with 1 cup of macaroni and cheese

1 cup mixed vegetables

1 cup of 100% grape juice

Afternoon Snack Peanut Butter Sandwich

1 medium apple

Dinner 6 oz. sirloin steak

2 cups black beans and rice

2 cups mixed salad greens and vegetables with Italian dressing

1 cup of 100% orange juice

Evening Snack 2 cups of 2% chocolate milk

1/2 cup dry roasted almonds

During Practice Approximately 6 cups of Powerade

****When planning your own meals for home or eating out, think about dividing your plate into thirds: cover 1/3 with fruits or vegetables, 1/3 with high-fiber starches, and 1/3 with lean protein.**