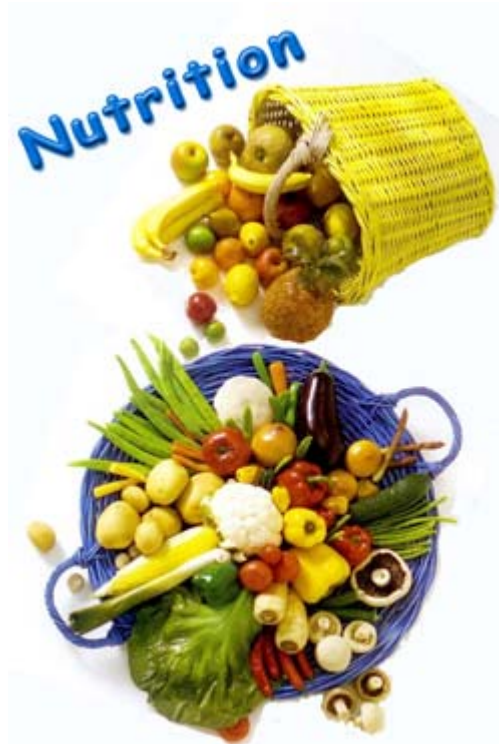


Keeping It Real

Jennifer Hutchison has some suggestions of what, and when, you should eat to enhance your recovery

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The sports nutrition industry has worked to meet the recovery needs of athletes by engineering foods and drinks that are convenient, taste good (for the most part) and require no more thought than popping a top, opening a wrapper or mixing a drink. The down side to this advance in science is that many athletes find themselves convinced that they must have these manufactured foods to recover when they could also get carbohydrates, protein, fluid and electrolytes from.....food.

What ever happened to good old food? Are we too pooped from the 70.3 and Ironman training that we have to sustain ourselves on a sticky foundation of drinks, bars or gels? Do not get me wrong, I am a fan of some of the well researched good tasting products. They have certainly made my life as a coach and athlete easier. But the Dietitian in me and our creed of "Use food first!" never fails to provide a reality check. As athletes we need to stop and look at keeping our recovery nutrition real with real foods. This month I'll offer a brief review of recovery guidelines and provide some "food" for thought by sharing ideas on other types of real food that can be used to deliver recovery nutrients.

Review on recovery guidelines:

Recovery nutrition is everyday nutrition with a focus on carbohydrates, protein, fluids and electrolytes. Timing is the backbone to a sound recovery nutrition plan. Strategies to meet the nutritional needs post workout depend greatly on the type, duration and the time between workouts.

DAILY:

Recovery nutrition is more than just your nutrition post workout. Optimal daily carbohydrate and fluid intake before during and after your workouts can ensure you are going into your next session well fueled. A well fueled and hydrated body before and during the workout will recover more quickly.

For most athletes, daily carbohydrate intake should be in the range of 2.25 to three gms per pound body weight (or 1.0 – 1.2 gm per kg). This varies according your where you are in your periodized training plan, so for some you may need up to 4.5 to 5 gms per pound body weight (10 gms per kg). Carbohydrate sources should be whole grains, low fat dairy, fruits and vegetables.

Meals should be planned three to four hours before a workout to allow adequate digestion time. Higher carbohydrate snacks may be tolerated one to two hours before. Just remember that liquid or semi solid works best the closer it is to the start time.

Fuel appropriately during your training and race. Use the following link to read more detail about fueling during your workouts. <http://www.ironman.com/training/nutrition/fueling-during-training-how-much>

POST WORKOUT

The body is most receptive to replenishing body carbohydrate during the 30 minute to two hour window following your workout or race. Rule of thumb is 0.5 gm per pound body weight (or one gm per kg) within the two hour post workout period. For athletes weighing between 125 and 175 pounds this can mean 62 to 88 gms or 260 to 352 calories respectively. However, to keep it simple, just know you should target between 50 to 100 gms or 200 to 400 kcals within two hours of a hard workout. This can come from a snack (200 cal) or a meal (400+ cal).

Real foods that fall in the range: (FYI-these are some of my favorites)

- 1 c Kashi Go Lean Crunch (or 2 Kashi Waffles) with 8 oz Low fat/Nonfat Milk or Soymilk
 - 8 oz Lowfat Yogurt + Pineapple (Blueberries or Cherries)
 - 1 Tbsp Almond or Peanut Butter, Honey & Banana + Whole Grain Pita
- 2 oz Sliced Turkey, 2 Tbsp Hummus, Fresh Spinach & Tomato + Whole Wheat Wrap + Bagel Chips
- 1 c Oatmeal w/ 2 Tbsp Oat bran (made w/ nonfat powdered milk) + Blueberries. Topped with brown sugar & ground flaxseed.

ONE A DAY

If you are working out once a day you should be able to recover adequately by consuming your normal meals and snacks which include carbohydrates, protein, fluid and electrolytes. Short or low intensity workouts give you some wiggle room with the recovery window. Just make sure you are getting a meal or snack within two hours of completion.

Since a race counts as a one a day session, review the Post Ironman Nutrition article for more specific guidelines post race: <http://www.ironman.com/training/nutrition/post-ironman-nutrition>

TWO A DAYS + (with less than 8 hours between)

Athletes who regularly do two or more sessions a day will have a greater challenge using real foods. Recovery from two plus workouts a day requires thought and planning. To ensure the body is ready for the next session the refueling should take place *as soon as practical* but you should try to honor the 30 minute post workout window. The rule of thumb mentioned above combine with smaller frequent meals/snacks may be best.

There is no real difference in recovery (carbohydrate/glycogen storage) when solid, semi solid or liquid carbohydrates are consumed. When it's all said and done meeting your energy requirements is the most important aspect of recovery nutrition.

Tips to make REAL foods for recovery foods:

- Shop with recovery foods in mind. If you want to be successful with using more real foods, you have to have them in the house. If pressed for prep time, buy items that are

already pre cooked chopped or package. Fresh foods are always preferred but frozen is an acceptable alternative.

- Prepare extra. There is no additional time investment for throw a couple more pieces of chicken on the grill, potatoes in the oven or pasta in the pot.
- Plan ahead. Put as much thought into what you are going to eat post workout as you do planning what you are going pack for your next session. To keep foods cold, pack a small cooler just as if you are packing a lunch. Use frozen water bottles (or even frozen juice boxes) as a “chill” pack.
- Get help if needed. If you are stumped on how to turn the real foods you like into recovery snacks and meals, consider using a dietitian. Check out www.eatright.org or www.scandpg.org and use the “Find a Dietitian” search engine to locate a nutrition professional near you.

Here are a few ideas of other recovery foods. The list is not all inclusive.

Whole Grain cereal (Kashi Go Lean Crunch, Shredded Wheat & Bran, Oatmeal, Oat Bran)

Whole Grain Pitas, Tortillas, Bagels, English Muffins, Flatbread

Lowfat Plain Yogurt

Flavored milk (Chocolate, vanilla, strawberry)

Flavored Soymilk Cottage Cheese

String Cheese

100% Fruit Juice or V-8 Fusion (nice blend of fruit and vegetable juices)

Dried fruit (Apricots, Cherries, Raisins, Prunes)

Frozen Cherries, Blueberries, Strawberries, Peaches (fresh when in season)

Fresh Spinach

Frozen Vegetables (fresh is always preferred)

Peppers- Red, Yellow, Orange

Tomatoes (Fresh Salsa is good too!)

Sweet Potatoes

Almond Butter

Nutella (a yummy chocolate hazelnut spread)

Hummus

Flaxseed- ground fresh- add to cereals and salads.

Cream of Tomato soup made with skim milk + Soy Crisps

Minestrone Soup with added beans and pasta

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