

# Nutrition

## What You Need to Know about Pre-Competition Meals

### - No foods, not even high-carbohydrate foods, should be eaten in the hour before competition.

#### Why the Pre-Competition Meal?

The purpose of the pre-competition meal is to avoid hunger before and during the event. This meal helps you stay physically comfortable and mentally alert. If the meal is eaten at least six hours before the event and follows an overnight fast, the meal can raise blood glucose levels and liver glycogen.

#### What to include in the Pre-Competition Meal?

Your pre-competition meal should include several high-carbohydrate foods. These foods take the least time to pass through your stomach. Most foods from the Vegetable Group, Fruit Group, and Grain Group are excellent sources of carbohydrate.

High-protein foods like low fat dairy foods and lean meats (tuna; baked ham; broiled, skinless chicken), may be safely included in your pre-competition meal. However, eat them in moderate portions.

#### Before competition avoid:

- Higher-fat foods like hamburger, sausage, lunch meats, and peanut butter.
- Fried foods like doughnuts, chips, French fries, and fried fish or chicken.
- Fats like mayonnaise and salad dressings.

Because these foods are higher in fat, they take the longest time to pass through the stomach. Foods that remain in the stomach during competition may cause indigestion, nausea, and even vomiting. If you include any of these foods in your pre-competition meal, eat them in small amounts.

#### High-Carbohydrate Foods

Be sure to include several high-carbohydrate foods in your pre-competition meal. The following foods are good sources of carbohydrate.

#### Milk Group

Low fat chocolate milk, Ice milk, Low fat frozen yogurt, Skim milk, Low fat milk, Low fat yogurt.

#### Meat Group

Black eyed peas, Pinto beans, Navy beans, Refried beans.

#### Vegetable Group

Corn, Potatoes, Peas, (baked, boiled, or mashed), Sweet potatoes.

### **Fruit Group**

Apples, Oranges, Bananas, Pears, Grapes, Raisins.

### **Grain Group**

Bagel, Pasta, Cornflakes, Pita bread, English muffin, Raisin bran, Hard Roll, Rice, Oatmeal, Whole wheat bread.

## **Some Sample Pre-Competition Meals**

These sample pre-competition meals include plenty of high-carbohydrate foods.

### **Sample Meal #1:**

Orange juice, cornflakes with a sliced banana, whole wheat toast with jelly, and skim milk.

### **Sample Meal #2:**

Vegetable soup, chicken sandwich on wheat bread, applesauce, and low fat strawberry yogurt.

### **Sample Meal #3:**

Julienne salad (lettuce and other fresh vegetables with thin strips of cheese and turkey), a hard roll, frozen yogurt, and grape juice.

## **When Should You Eat the Pre-Competition Meal?**

The pre-competition meal should be eaten one to four hours before the game. No foods, not even high-carbohydrate foods, should be eaten in the hour before competition.

The only thing you should have right before competition is plenty of cool fluid so you don't overheat.

### **4 HOURS BEFORE PRACTICE OR THE GAME.**

Choose a high-carbohydrate meal from the foods above.

Aim for one that supplies 8 calories for each pound you weigh.

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} \times 8 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

Your weight                      calories for the meal

Circle the foods you choose in red. Be sure to include something from each food group. Aim for around 120-250 grams of carbohydrate (CHO) (depending on your weight).

### **1 1/2 HOURS BEFORE PRACTICE OR THE GAME.**

If your hungry, choose a light snack. That way, you will avoid indigestion and nausea.

Pick a snack that supplies about 2 Calories per pound you weigh.

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} \times 2 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

your weight                      calories for the snack

Circle the foods you choose in blue. Try for around 30-60 grams of carbohydrate (depending on your weight).

### **LESS THAN AN HOUR BEFORE PRACTICE OF THE GAME.**

Don't eat anything. Make sure to drink 1 1/2 cups (12 oz.) of water or a sports drink 10-15

minutes before exercise.

**DURING PRACTICE OR THE GAME.**

Drink 1/2 cup of cool water or sports drink every 10-15 minutes during practice or competition.