



Performance Nutrition for Athletes

Understand **FOOD AS A FUEL**

Soccer players should fuel for explosive, short burst activities

PRIOR PLANNING prevents poor performance

The 'refueling window' of opportunity is very small – 45 minutes

After-activity meals: **Stage One**

- First 45 minutes after activity
- Start recovery
- Small Meal
- THREE COLORS
- Fluid

Sample Stage One Meals

- Cereal (as a snack). Store in tupperware
- Peanut Butter Sandwich(es)
- Whole Grain breads
- 'Juicy' fruits (i.e.: oranges, apples, pears)
- Veggie Sticks Breadsticks
- Hummus Dip
- Baked potatoes
- Sweet Desert – cookies, brownies etc.
- Yogurt with fruit on the bottom 8-10 oz.

Stage Two

- Get a solid meal within 2 hours after activity
- Fuel for next activity
- More fluid

Sample Stage One Meals

- Water
- Pasta with meat or poultry source. Get veggie serving
- Non-greasy pizza
- Pancakes with LEAN protein source
- Stuffed potatoes
- Subway sandwich plus additional foods
- AVOID burgers, fries and fried foods

Glycemic Effect

- High Glycemic Effect increases blood sugar quickly – best for post-activity
- Low Glycemic Effect increases blood sugar slowly – best for pre-activity

Time to Digestion

- Simple carbohydrates – 1-2 hours
- Complex carbohydrate – 2-4 hours
- Fats – 4-6 hours
- Protein – 6 to 8 hours

Before exercise

- 2-3 hours before exercise, drink 17-20 ounces of water or a sports drink.
- 10-20 minutes before exercise, drink another 7-10 ounces of water or a sports drink.

During exercise

- Drink early. Thirst doesn't trigger until 1 pint down. Drink beyond your thirst
- 1 pint low = 10% less performance
- Every 10-20 minutes drink at least 7-10 ounces of water.

References

- Nancy Clark, Sports Nutrition Guidebook 2nd ed, Human Kinetics Pub: Champaign, IL.
- Cynthia Lair with Scott Murdoch, Feeding the Young Athlete, Moon Smile Press: Seattle, WA.