

Knowing How to Prepare for Training is Important!



Preparation starts well before your training start time!

There are several factors that will help you achieve optimum performance and assist you get through each work out. Below we outline the most important.

- Sleep
- Hydration
- Good nutrition

Sleep

Most people need 7.5 - 9hrs sleep a night. When you are training more than you are used to, you may need to go to bed a little earlier to ensure you get a good night's sleep to fully recover.

Tiredness also leads to mistakes and errors in judgement, which in turn can lead to unnecessary injuries.

Try these tips to improve your sleep:

- Go to bed and get up the same time every day.
- Stop drinking any caffeinated drinks after 2pm.
- Put your phone down an hour before bed time.
- Put your phone into “Do Not Disturb” mode during the night so notifications don’t wake you.
- If you are having trouble getting to sleep, try deep breathing – 7count in, hold for 4, blow out for 8 count.

If you do not get enough sleep, you are not only tired the next day, but as sleep is the time your body repairs itself, you will not perform well the next day and could lead to injury.

Hydration

You need to stay hydrated.

It is recommended to consume both water and sodium (you can add a small pinch of salt to your water which will hardly be noticeable when drinking), before exercise. This will help to improve and retain a higher fluid balance.

Drinking enough throughout the day is critical. If you are feeling thirsty at any time and especially before exercise, although it is not too late, it is not ideal.

You need to drink approx. 2 bottles (1.5 - 2 litres) of water every day to stay hydrated.

It is recommended that you drink 500 – 600mls of water at least four hours before exercise and 250 – 350mls of water 10 – 15 minutes before exercise.

During the warmer months you may need to increase your water consumption, as even **slight dehydration** can cause a **decrease** in **physical** and **mental** ability during exercise.

Drinking plenty of water before exercise is crucial to great performance. Your body needs water to function. Good hydration will sustain and enhance performance, while dehydration can lead to significant performance decreases. Drink at least 2x bottles each day.

What to Eat Before a Workout.

Good nutrition can help your body perform better and recover faster after each workout.

Optimal nutrient intake prior to exercise will not only help you maximize your performance but also help minimize muscle damage.

Fueling your body with the right nutrients (food) and water, prior to exercise will give you the energy and strength you need to perform better and get through your work out.

Following is a brief look at the role of each macronutrient.

Carbohydrates (Carb’s)

Your muscles use the glucose from carbs for fuel.

Glycogen is the way the body processes and stores glucose, mainly in the liver and muscles.

For short- and high-intensity exercise, your glycogen stores are your muscles' main source of energy.

But for longer exercises, the degree to which carbs are used depends on several factors.

These include:

- The intensity
- Type of training
- And your overall diet.

Your muscles' glycogen stores are limited and as you deplete these stores, your physical output and intensity diminishes.

Carb loading:

Involves consuming a high-carb diet for 1–7 days, is a well-known method to maximize glycogen stores, which will be beneficial leading up to the longest day at the end of your course. This will allow your body to have more energy available to use over a longer period of time.

Carbs help maximize glycogen stores for high-intensity exercise, while fat helps fuel your body for longer, less intense workouts.

Protein

Many studies have documented the potential of pre-workout protein consumption to improve athletic performance.

Eating protein (alone or with carbs) prior to exercise has been shown to increase muscle protein synthesis, which repairs muscle that is damaged from intense exercise.

Benefits of eating protein before exercise include:

- A better anabolic response (muscle tone/growth)
- Improved muscle recovery
- Increased strength and lean body mass
- Increased muscle performance

Protein improves muscle protein synthesis aiding with your recovery.

***Adding a carb and protein source together will increase the length of time the energy from the carbohydrate is available to use for exercise. E.g. an apple and a handful of nuts.**

Fats

While glycogen is used for short- and high-intensity bouts of exercise, fat is the source of fuel for longer and moderate-to-low-intensity exercise.

It is not recommended to have a high amount of fat if there is less than 2 hours before your event.

Fat is beneficial, but it should be consumed at least two hours before exercise.

The Timing of Your Pre-Workout Meal Is Key

To maximize the results of your training, try to eat a complete meal containing carbs, protein and fat 2–3 hours before you exercise.

If for whatever reason, you cannot get a full meal in 2–3 hours before working out, you can still eat a decent pre-workout meal but don't forget to exclude the Fat.

Keep in mind, the sooner you eat before your workout, the smaller and simpler the meal needs to be.

If you eat 30 - 60 minutes prior to your workout, choose foods that are simple to digest and contain mainly carbs and if you can include some protein. ***This will help prevent any stomach discomfort during exercise.***

Following are some examples of pre-workout meals:

If Your Workout Starts Within 2–3 Hours or more - eat just one of the following.

- Sandwich on whole-grain bread, lean protein (meat) and a side salad
- Egg omelette and whole-grain toast topped with avocado and a small piece of fruit
- Lean protein e.g. chicken or fish, brown rice and roasted vegetables
- 250mls water every hour prior (add a pinch of salt so you don't taste it, but will stop you going to the toilet all the time)

If Your Workout Starts Within 2 Hours - eat just one of the following.

- Protein smoothie made with milk, protein powder, banana, and mixed berries
- Whole-grain cereal and milk
- A cup of oatmeal topped with banana and sliced almonds
- Natural almond butter and fruit jam sandwich on whole-grain bread
- 300 – 450mls water (with a small pinch of salt as above)

If Your Workout Starts Within an Hour or Less - eat just one of the following.

- Greek yogurt and fruit
- A nutrition bar with protein and wholesome ingredients e.g 1x OSM bar
- 1 piece of fruit, such as ½ of a large banana, or, 1x orange, or, 1x apple, or, 1x pear and a handful of nuts (preferably unsalted) with whatever fruit chosen.
- 250 – 300mls water (with a small pinch of salt so you don't taste it but will stop you going to the toilet all the time).

SUMMARY

- Sleep is imperative for good performance and recovery ready for the next session.
- Hydration is crucial throughout the day.
- A combination of carbs and protein is recommended for pre-workout meals.
- Fat can also be beneficial, but it should be consumed at least two hours before exercise.