



Athletes: The Key to Healthy Eating Habits

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Description

Sports nutrition is the study and application of a diet or practice that has the objective to improve athletic performance. The best performance is obtained by supplying the appropriate amount of food (protein, carbohydrates, fats, fibre, *etc.*), water and nutrients to maximize energy and aid in sports recovery. It is especially common in endurance and strength sports. Consuming the proper mix of food and drink is vital for everyone and athletes should be aware that it can also have an impact on performance. The relationship between good health and proper nutrition is well recognized. Interest in nutrition and its impact on athletic performance has evolved into a science in and of itself.

Whether you are a competitive athlete, a weekend sports participant or a serious daily exerciser, a nutritionally balanced diet is essential for better performance.

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Sports Performance and Energy

Fueling your body with the correct foods is critical for athletic performance, particularly lipids, protein and carbs, which help the body maintain energy. Carbohydrates are the primary fuel needed by exercising muscles, therefore an appropriate intake is critical for avoiding muscle exhaustion. While it is essential to limit your fat intake, you should not fully eliminate it from your diet. Fats contain fatty acids, which can be used as an energy source, particularly if your workout sessions last more than an hour. Fats are also essential for hormone production and cell wall development. Protein can be used as a source of energy and is necessary for the development of new muscular tissue. If you engage in resistance exercise, your body will demand.

Nutrients

Nutrients provide fuel for the body to maintain our mental and physical well-being, we must consume a well-balanced diet rich in nutrients that will take us through our daily lives. Not only during physical activity, but also before and after. Important nutrients include.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are classified into two types: Starchy (complex) and simple sugars. Simple sugars are carbohydrates contained in processed items with a sweet flavour, such as white bread and sugary cereals. Complex carbohydrates, often known as starches, are found in grains like bread, pasta and rice. Similar to simple sugars, some complex carbohydrates are superior to others. Processed refined grains, such as white rice and white flour, are less favourable.

Fat

Fat is a vital part of any diet since it is an excellent source of energy and aids in the body's absorption of nutrients. Meat and dairy products, along with other processed foods, are common sources of saturated fats. It is believed that this kind of fat increases your levels of (Low-Density Lipoprotein) LDL (bad) cholesterol and is not good for your heart.

Nuts, avocados, olives, fatty salmon and nuts are foods high in unsaturated fats. They are thought to be heart-healthy and have the ability to increase (High-Density Lipoprotein) HDL (good) cholesterol and



decrease LDL cholesterol.

Protein

Protein is also called Building Blocks of Protein. Protein is found in all cells of the body and is essential for tissue formation and repair. It is also utilized to produce enzymes, hormones and a range of other bodily compounds, as well as the structural components of bones, muscles, cartilage, skin and blood.

Protein-rich foods include meat, fish, eggs, lentils, nuts, seeds and soy products.

Micronutrients

Micronutrients are chemical components that consist of thirteen organic essential vitamins and seven inorganic minerals. When taken in the human body, micronutrients aid in energy production, haemoglobin synthesis, healthy growth, bone and immunological health and regular metabolism.

The thirteen essential vitamins are classified as either water-soluble or fat-soluble.

Water-soluble vitamins, including the eight vitamins that make up the vitamin B complex and vitamin C, must be ingested on a regular basis since the body cannot store what it does not utilize right away. In contrast, the fat-soluble vitamins, vitamin K, A, D and E, may be stored in the body's adipose tissue and hence do not need to be ingested on a regular basis to maintain the correct amounts in the body.

Minerals are inorganic nutrients that are essential for an athlete's well-being. The seven minerals required to sustain appropriate energy and hydration levels are:

- Calcium
- Iron
- Zinc
- Magnesium
- Sodium
- Chloride
- Potassium

Make water your best friend

Water is vital for life and hydration is important for health, especially in athletes and physically active people who have greater requirements. Drinking enough fluids is critical for improving workout performance and recuperation. Exercise elevates body temperature; thus, the body attempts to cool itself by sweating. This leads to the loss of water and salts through the skin. Dehydration can cause fatigue and reduce strength and aerobic capacity (particularly when exercising for an extended amount of time). So, especially when exercising at greater levels or in warmer weather, it is critical to stay hydrated before, during and after exercise to avoid dehydration:

The quantity an individual sweats varies from person to person and is based on:

- ✚ Longer and more intense activity can result in more sweat loss.
- ✚ Sweat loss might rise when the environment is hot and humid.
- ✚ Clothing - the more clothing you wear, the faster you will heat up, perhaps leading to more perspiration loss.