



Performance Nutrition

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Optimal nutrition is a critical component of maximizing performance in sports, school, work, and everyday life. Unfortunately, it is also an extremely confusing part of the training process to understand whether you are trying to improve athletic performance, decrease body fat, or just improve overall health. The average consumer is not to blame as many conflicting sources of information exist among the media, fitness and nutrition experts, as well as science itself which has produced conflicting research in some cases. When trying to take on such a complex topic and provide useful information to people, I try and make it as simple as possible. I start by educating people on a few easy to implement but extremely important guidelines. I try and take it one step at a time and can always suggest more complex changes once fundamental changes are implemented. I also keep my guidelines consistent with current research and expert opinions along with my own opinion and common sense. Listed below are four necessary components of optimal nutrition for achieving peak performance no matter what your goals are.

#1 Eat Breakfast: You just got done with an eight hour fast and your energy levels are low. If you decide to skip breakfast your body will begin to break down muscle tissue for energy. A proper breakfast should contain adequate levels of the three macronutrients (carbohydrates, protein, and fat) along with some water. An example of an ideal breakfast that I consume every single morning is a large bowl of oatmeal with blueberries and whey protein powder, 3-4 eggs, a large glass of water, and green tea.



#2 Eat Before You Workout: If you consume a meal or adequate sized snack 1 or 2 hours before training you will be fine. If it has been 4 or more hours since eating you need to consume something to fuel your workout and avoid breaking down muscle tissue. What if you just woke up for an early morning session or you just left school or work and are going straight to your training session? You definitely need to drink a nutrition shake or eat a small amount of food. A meal replacement shake such as a Smart Shake would be ideal because it provides just enough carbohydrates and protein to fuel your workout. Personally, I drink a shake or eat a small peanut butter and jelly sandwich within minutes of starting my training session if I haven't eaten for awhile.

#3 Eat After You Workout: When you go through a training session, your body uses a tremendous amount of energy. In addition, your muscle tissue becomes damaged and needs to be repaired. An appropriately designed program will provide just enough muscle tissue disruption to recover from and create new and higher levels of physical performance. However, optimal progress will not happen if your body is not provided with carbohydrates and protein within 10 minutes and no later than 1 hour after training. The training stimulus creates an ideal hormonal environment to replenish energy and rebuild muscle tissue in the period immediately following it. This window of opportunity needs to be taken advantage of by consuming a shake containing adequate carbohydrates and protein with little to no fat. Research has consistently shown the recovery process to take 3 to 4 times longer if an appropriate post workout nutritional strategy is not employed even if the same amount of carbohydrates

and protein are consumed at a later time. Food that is quickly digested and contains the proper macronutrients will also work. A large bowl of cereal with whey protein powder is one example I use on a frequent basis.

#4 Take Quality Multivitamin and Fish Oil Supplements: Multivitamins are necessary as an insurance policy to make sure you are not deficient in any key vitamins or minerals. Even if you consume a well balanced diet you may be deficient in just one vitamin or mineral. In this case, it would be well worth taking the multivitamin supplement because it only takes a deficiency in one thing to hold up your progress. If you already have everything you need from your diet (extremely rare), you just simply excrete the unused vitamins and minerals out of your body. I also put fish oil supplements in this category as this has become a highly recommended daily supplement for everybody and should be taken on a consistent basis just like a multivitamin. Fish oil is a well researched supplement and has been shown to improve body composition by reducing body fat, reduce joint pain and inflammation and significantly reduce the incidence of heart attacks by as much as 50% in one study. Notice I



said take “quality” multivitamin and fish oil supplements. Some cheap brands need to be avoided because they may or may not contain what the label says and your body may not be able to absorb it. For example, some multivitamins are held together with a tar like substance that your body cannot digest. In this case, the vitamins pass through your entire digestive system without any absorption taking place which is obviously completely worthless.

Start by implementing these four guidelines and you will greatly improve your progress from training. After following these basic guidelines on a consistent basis, more complex nutritional strategies can be implemented at a later stage. I provided an example of a typical breakfast that I consume but I actually left out four other details in order to keep it simple. Just take one step at a time for the greatest chance for success.