

Pre / Post Game Nutrition

- Carbohydrates (sugars, starches, and fiber) are our first readily available and efficient source of energy. The pre-game meals should provide an adequate amount of energy and fluid for the competition.
- Achieve a large storage of carbohydrates in muscles and liver, more so for endurance athletes
- Carbs are more easily digested so the stomach empties more quickly. Fats or proteins are digested more slowly.
- Liquid consumption (water, fruit juice, Gatorade) should be increased, about 1 Pint (½ Liter) about 2 hours before competitions.
- Meals should be eaten 3 – 4 hours before the competition, and should be foods that the athlete enjoys, will allow him / her to feel more psychologically satisfied and ready to compete.
- Liquid food supplements, such as Gatorade Nutrition Shakes, can also be used for a pre-game meal.
- Snacks during competition should be light, nothing really high in protein or fat but high in carbohydrates, especially in simple sugars which are more quickly absorbed in the body to be used more quickly. Also drink plenty of water during competition.
- Post-game meals should be to replenish the nutrients that were used during the competition; high in carbohydrates and high in protein along with drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration. This meal or snack should be consumed within 30 min to 2 hours after the session.

Water vs. Gatorade and Hydration

- Athletes should begin all exercise sessions well hydrated. This can be done through drink either water or a sport drink such as Gatorade.
- Pre-exercise hydration should include consuming 17 – 20 fl. oz of water or Gatorade 2 – 3 hours before and then another 7 – 10 fl. oz 10 – 20 minutes before the exercise session.
- Gatorade contains a 6% carbohydrate solution allowing the athlete to replenish carbs for pre/during/post exercise and also contains electrolytes (sodium and potassium). No protein.
- Fluids must be maintained during exercise to prevent dehydration and the amount of fluid consumed should be based on the environment, type of exercise, intensity, conditioning status of the athlete, acclimatization status, and individual athlete.
- Gatorade consumed during exercise can delay the onset of fatigue and improve performance through replenishing glycogen and maintaining electrolytes.
- Post-exercise consumption of fluids should aim to correct any fluid lost during the exercise session and ideally replenish water, carbohydrates, and electrolytes. Gatorade is ideal in this situation.
- Sodium chloride in sport drinks are beneficial when athletes are not getting an adequate meal or no meal before exercise, during intense sessions of exercise last 4 or more hours, and when athlete are acclimatizing to hot weather.
- Hydration can be determined through urine color and volume. If there is a decreased amount of urine and/or the urine is a darker color fluids should be ingested.