

## EATING FOR SWIMMING

Eating the right foods will help you to perform at your best.

What, how much and when you eat will have a big impact on your health, energy and performance.

Carbohydrates come in two forms - simple (sugars) and complex (starches). Sugar as a fuel is like a firework - a "big bang" of energy and then nothing else. Complex carbohydrates are similar to coal, burning slowly over a longer period of time. A mixture of the two is required, though the majority should be the starchy unrefined complex carbohydrates such as wholegrain cereals and cereal products (wholemeal bread, muesli, rice, pasta, potatoes etc.), beans, peas and lentils. These foods also contain protein, vitamins and minerals and have high fibre content. You should not rely on simple carbohydrates such as sweets, junk food and sugar to provide the carbohydrate in your diet!

Remember - the pasta you eat the night before a competition will have a much greater and longer lasting effect than a chocolate bar on the day!



### BEFORE TRAINING

Eat a meal 1 to 3 hours before training, and accompany with a drink of water.

- ✓ Jacket potato with cheese, tuna or baked beans plus salad. No chips!
- ✓ Pasta with tomato-based sauce or pesto, with vegetables. Tuna is also good energy source
- ✓ Rice or noodles with chicken, fish or beans
- ✓ Beans on toast - beans are full of protein and wholemeal toast has your complex carbohydrate
- ✓ Sandwich/roll/ bagel/ wrap filled with tuna, cheese, chicken or peanut butter



### PRE-TRAINING SNACKS

If you don't have time for a meal, have a snack approximately 30 minutes to an hour before training with a drink of water. You should **NEVER** train on empty!

- ✓ A banana (or other fresh fruit) and a handful of nuts
- ✓ A handful of dried fruit (raisins, apricots)
- ✓ A cereal bar
- ✓ A pot of fruit yoghurt and an apple
- ✓ A couple of slices of bread or toast with honey
- ✓ Two or three mini pancakes
- ✓ A couple of rice cakes with peanut butter

## EATING FOR SWIMMING



### DURING TRAINING (LASTING OVER AN HOUR)

Most swimmers are dehydrated. During training it is important to stay hydrated.

- ✓ Start drinking early during training - within the first 30 minutes
- ✓ Aim to drink around 500 ml per hour
- ✓ Drink little and often, ideally every 15-20 minutes
- ✓ Fruit juice diluted with an equal amount of water
- ✓ Squash diluted 1:4 with water
- ✓ Isotonic sports drink (40-60g sugar per 1 litre)

It is also advisable to fill a 2 litre bottle with fluid at the beginning of the day to drink throughout the day, every 30 minutes is ideal. This is in addition to drinks for training.



### RECOVERY SNACKS

Ideally 50-60g carbohydrate plus 10-20 g protein within 30 minutes after training

- ✓ 500 ml flavoured milk
- ✓ One banana plus 500ml of milk
- ✓ 2 pots (2 x 150g) of fruit yoghurt
- ✓ One cereal bar plus 500 ml semi skimmed milk
- ✓ 60g raisins fruit and 50g nuts
- ✓ 4 rice cakes with 20g peanut butter plus 200ml orange juice

## WHAT TO EAT BEFORE A COMPETITION

### THE DAY BEFORE

Eat meals and snacks high in complex carbohydrates. You need to keep glycogen stores topped up.

- ✓ Drink fluids little and often to stay properly hydrated.
- ✓ Eat little and often - every two to four hours to keep blood sugar levels steady and fuel your muscles in preparation.
- ✓ Avoid big meals or over-eating in the evening.
- ✓ Stick to familiar foods.

### MORNING OF THE EVENT

Do not swim on empty. Even if you feel nervous have breakfast, do stick to easily digested foods.

- ✓ Cereal with milk
- ✓ Porridge
- ✓ Banana with yogurt
- ✓ Fruit
- ✓ Wholemeal toast with jam

If you are struggling, try liquid meals such as milkshakes, yoghurt drinks or a smoothie.