

Eating for Peak Performance



No pill or magic formula can instantly turn you into a super-athlete. But eating right can help you perform at your best.

Carbohydrates—from bread, pasta, potatoes, and fruit—provide energy for vigorous activity. So active people need to replenish this fuel frequently. Don't expect to get a quick energy boost from a snack you eat just before starting out, though. Instead, consuming a high-carbohydrate food like skim milk and a banana, whole wheat bread, or an orange an hour or two before a workout acts like a time-release capsule of energy.

Because you lose electrolytes (potassium, sodium, magnesium, and calcium) in sweat during vigorous activity, drink plenty of water and eat foods that are rich in these minerals. Almost all fruits and vegetables are rich in potassium, but potatoes, bananas, orange juice, winter squash, cantaloupe, sweet potatoes, and cooked beans are especially high. Sodium is rarely lost in quantities greater than amounts you would normally consume, so you don't need to worry about getting extra.