

RIBBLE VALLEY AC

NUTRITION

Eat right, Drink well - Maximise Performance

Eating the right foods and drinking the correct fluids is now a big part of sport. The right diet can improve performance and help the body recover from exercise – it also makes you feel livelier and prevents illnesses.

What's in a healthy diet?

It's not just something you do before or after training. A healthier diet overall will help both on and off the track/ sports field.

The **more** you exercise, the **more energy** you will need.

Although carbohydrates like bread or pasta are the best providers of energy, a balanced diet is recommended.

Your diet should be **BALANCED** in roughly the following quantities:

Carbohydrate	60% of diet
Fat	25% of diet
Protein	15% of diet

A balanced diet contains:

- Plenty of carbohydrates such as bread, rice, noodles, cereals, potatoes and pasta
- Lots of fruit and vegetables (ideally five portions a day)
- Protein in the form of meat, chicken, fish, dairy products, eggs and nuts
- A limited amount of fatty and sugary foods such as sweets and crisps

Carbohydrates are rich with starch which is easily turned into energy by the body.

Protein builds healthy muscles which are essential for growth and help avoid injury.

And fruit and vegetables are full of vitamins and minerals which help repair the body and keep it healthy.

Carbohydrates

Foods high in carbohydrates provide you with the energy your muscles need and are the basis of a winning diet.

Healthy carbohydrates - whole grains, etc as these contain the nutrients your body requires. Sugary snacks provide carbohydrate but do not contain as many nutrients.

Best sources of high carbohydrate foods are:

Breads, cereals, pasta (pasta with tomato based sauce is better than creamy sauces), rice, potato, and fruit

The **pre-training/competition meal** provides a final opportunity to top up fuel and fluid levels. Your last meal should leave you feeling comfortable, not full and not hungry.

A high-carbohydrate, low-fat meal or snack is the perfect choice for before your event or game. If you consume a bigger meal, have it 3-4 hours before you compete, and a light snack can be 1-2 hours before your warm-up. If you are nervous before you compete, try a liquid meal instead of something solid.

Find your own routine that you are happy with, this will take time and practice.

Examples of good pre-training/competition meals:

- Breakfast cereal + low-fat milk + fresh/canned fruit (in own juice is better than syrup)
- Muffins or crumpets + jam/honey
- Pancakes + syrup
- Toast + baked beans or spaghetti
- Rolls or sandwiches with banana filling
- Fruit salad + low-fat yoghurt
- Pasta + tomato based sauce
- Baked potato + low-fat filling
- Sports bars or cereal bars + sports drink
- Fruit smoothie (low-fat milk + fruit + low-fat yoghurt/ice cream)

Chocolate

- Try to avoid excess chocolate – although you are burning up loads of energy so it is a useful product
- Do not eat chocolate prior to training or competition as it contains some fat which is hard to break down into energy quickly and can sometimes “sit” on your stomach. Instead use chocolate as a treat after competition or training to replenish your energy stores ready for the next day
- Best chocolate bars are those with the lowest fat contents

Fast Foods or “Junk Foods”

- Again you are burning up loads of energy so 1 visit or treat per week to McDonalds , Fish and Chip Shop or Takeaway is not going to you any harm
- These foods do provide carbohydrates but also contain too much fat which is hard to translate into energy
- When you go to such places – Consider the following - 2 Regular burgers and a milk shake provide less fat and more carbohydrate than does a double decker with fries
- Pizzas – if you like pizza – the best ones are those with a thicker base – and try to avoid pizzas with triple cheese, meat feast etc. Better flavours are ham and pineapple, tuna or vegetable
- Bread and Jam/peanut butter are better than crisps, biscuits and chocolate as snacks

5 Portions of Fruit and Veg per Day

- Try to eat 5 portions of fruit and veg every day
- Fruit and Veg provide carbohydrates as well as well as most of the vitamins and minerals you require
- A glass of fresh orange juice (or any fruit juice) provides 1 portion
- Have a banana or apple at break time rather than a packet of crisps

Vitamins and Minerals

Vitamins - what are they?

Vitamins are organic compounds that help regulate fat, carbohydrate and protein metabolism in the body. They cannot be made by the body and have to be provided by the food we eat - fortunately we only need tiny amounts of these vitamins.

Vitamins are not an energy source, but they play a vital role in releasing the energy stored in the other foods we eat. In addition, our enzyme, nervous, hormonal and immune systems are dependent on vitamins for regulation and control. Because of this vitamins are essential for good health, wellbeing and growth.

Minerals - what are they?

Minerals are inorganic elements that have many roles in the body's functioning. Apart from their more well-known roles in the formation of strong bones and teeth, they also help to control the nervous system, fluid balance in tissues, muscle contractions, some hormonal functions and enzyme secretion.

Minerals are as essential as vitamins and, just like most vitamins, they cannot be made in the body. All our bodies' mineral needs have to be supplied from our diets.

- A Balanced diet will provide you with all you require
- Calcium is important to the young athlete as it aids bone growth and strength

How can you daily calcium requirements be achieved?

- 1 pint of low fat milk per day provides virtually all the amount of calcium required
- 1 ounce of cheese or one pot low fat yoghurt provides 1/3 as much calcium as a pint of milk
- Also – try – baked beans, green leafy veg or dried apricots

Iron is another crucial mineral especially for girls – How can you daily requirements be achieved?

- Include some red meat in your diet
- Breakfast cereals are usually fortified with iron
- Other good providers are oily fish, dried fruit, wholegrain cereals (shredded wheat) nuts, green leafy veg
- Try to include some Vitamin C with each meal – this improves absorption of iron into the body – small glass of orange or grapefruit juice does the trick

Proteins

Protein rebuilds your muscles and tissues after exercise

- Eat plenty of chicken, fish, eggs and nuts in your diet – nuts after training are great (but not salty)
- Kelly Holmes eats a bag of cashew nuts after training!
- Proteins are better after training as they do not provide a lot of energy – instead they help to rebuild damaged muscles tissues which occur every time we train/compete