

## **Before Training and Competition**

Preparation is the key to effective performance. You need to eat a carbohydrate rich meal (containing 75g carbohydrate) 3- 4 hours before exercise.

Examples of meals that contain high levels of carbohydrates are:

- Pasta
- Rice
- Jacket Potatoes
- Home made chips
- Baked beans
- Cereals
- Low fat yoghurt
- Custard

You will need to top up your carbohydrate stores 1 hour before you swim.

Some snacks containing 50g carbohydrate are:

- Lucozade Sport (800ml)
- Ribena Blackcurrant drink (350ml ready to drink)
- Jaffa cakes (×6)
- Digestive Biscuits (×5)
- Jelly babies/ beans (65g)
- Turkish Delight (65g)
- Lucozade sport energy bar & a banana
- Lucozade sport carbo gel & 8 dried apricots
- Milkshake (400ml)
- Banana smoothie (2 small bananas & ½ pint milk)
- Toast (3 medium slices wholemeal bread)
- Toast & honey (2 medium slices wholemeal bread & 2 tsp.

honey)

- Sandwich (3 medium slices wholemeal bread & lean meat)
- Fruit (3 pieces)
- Tomato soup & roll (1 tin soup & large wholemeal roll)
- Rice Pudding (1 tin low fat rice pudding)
- Cereal & milk (3 shredded wheat ½ pint milk)
- Fruit scones (×2)

If you are early morning training eat a slow release carbohydrate just before going to bed e.g. apples, pears, cereals and try to eat something from the above list about 15 minutes before you begin training.

## **Nutrition for Swimmers Competing in All Day/Weekend Meets**

Swimming events can last anything from 20 seconds to 15 minutes. Swimming is therefore a highly anaerobic sport, with aerobic metabolism becoming more important as the race distance increases.

Although each event may be brief, swim meets are usually held over one full day or the weekend, with swimmers typically competing in heats in the mornings and finals in the evening, or many event are heat declared winners. In most meets, swimmers may enter a large number of events and be required to swim a number of times in one day with 20 minutes to several hours between races.

So, the most important thing to consider is timing: what you can eat and drink and at what times.



### **What should I eat during the week leading up to the Meet?**

- Ensure a high-carbohydrate eating plan.
- Include more rice and pasta. About 70% of the calories in your diet should come from carbohydrates leading up to the event. (At least 55%!)
- Include nutritious carbohydrate snacks in between meals. Cereal bars are excellent. They are high in carbohydrate and are easy to put in your packed lunch.
- Eating the right balance of increased carbohydrate and less fat is the key.

### **What should I eat for The Pre-Event Meal?**

The pre-event meal is a 'mini-nutrition period' that occurs in the 2-3 hours before the start of a meet, usually the Breakfast. Most swimmers don't understand the exact role of the pre-event meal and eat as much carbohydrates as possible to top-up energy stores. It has little effect on increasing muscle glycogen levels.

Remember, to be able to perform well you usually need the stores of glycogen in your muscles to be full. It is the foods eaten during the week leading up to the meet that establishes the muscle glycogen levels. By meet day, glycogen levels are mostly "set" and there is little that you can do to increase them in the hours before competition.

Eat this meal about 2-3 hours before the warm-up. (This is the ideal but might be hard when warm-up is at 8:30 am!)

This meal should top-up your blood sugar levels after the night's rest. The meal should not have to be large, but should fill you up for the next few hours.

High-carbohydrate foods are the best options: e.g., bread, cereals, fruit, pasta, rice, though you probably won't want to eat pasta for breakfast!

- Ensure that the meal is low fat. Fat takes too long to digest.
- Useful drinks to have sports drink, juice, or simply water.
- Drink about 500-1000ml of water about 1 hour before the warm-up to 'top up' your hydration levels.
- Avoid the caffeine in cola drinks, coffee, chocolate, and tea - it dehydrates you.
- If you feel too nervous to eat, try a liquid meal such as a fruit smoothie.
- Practice with your pre-event meal in the days prior to the meet to fine tune what you will be eating. This will allow you to know whether it fills you up enough, and whether it tastes good!

## What can I have for Breakfast?

### Do's

- Eat cereals like oatmeal or oat bran.
- Select whole grain or high fiber cereals.
- Eat breads such as toast or bagels.
- Try milk, skimmed or low fat is best.
- Choose fruit, including fresh fruit and fruit juices.
- One egg with some toast.
- Choose fat free toppings like syrups and jams as an alternative to butter.



### Don'ts

- Have a full fry-up including sausage, ham or bacon.
- Have too many eggs, concentrate more on have carbohydrates rather than protein.
- Have high sugar children's cereals. They will give you a quick fix
- Have fast food breakfast sandwiches. They contain too much fat which takes longer to digest. This will make you feel "stuffed" and lazy in the pool.
- Use too much margarine or butter.

### And most importantly.....Don't.....

- Skip breakfast!!!!!! Swimming on an empty stomach makes you feel like you have no energy.



AVOID ME! I WON'T HELP YOUR PERFORMANCE!

