

At one point or another those of us who are active daily have probably asked the question- what should I eat after a workout? How much protein is enough? Should I eat carbs? Or do I even need to eat after a work? Well if that describes you at any time, the following quick read may help shed some light on your post workout quandary!

Current studies state muscle hypertrophy (muscle growth) and muscle protein metabolism are occurring for approximately 24-48hrs after an intense workout such as weight training or HIIT. These studies also state that meals consumed during this time period determine the impact on muscle hypertrophy.

So basically, the window in which your muscles are rebuilding after an intense workout is up to 48hrs and everything that you consume during that time is being used to replenish what was lost. Well how long do I have until I need to eat after a workout? And what should I eat?

Research suggests that in order to replenish what was lost in a way that is most beneficial to your muscles is to start consuming within 15 minutes to 2 hours after a workout depending on intensity level. I.e. the harder you work out the sooner you should eat. This is when the enzymes that produce glycogen are the most active, which can lead to glycogen depletion if you do not refuel with nutrients.

Your fitness goal determines how many calories/grams of protein and carbs you should eat after a workout. And is based on whether weight loss or muscle gain is your goal. The type of nutrients you should consume post workout only vary slightly.

You should be consuming protein and carbohydrates and avoiding fats within your 15min-2hr window to achieve either goal. It is suggested that fat slows the digestion and absorption of protein and carbohydrates.

Research is extremely varied on the type of carbohydrates to consume post work out. Some research states eating simple carbohydrates (fast absorbing) are the best whether weight loss or weight gain. And some research states complex carbohydrates (slow absorbing) are best for weight loss. Due to a slower and ultimately more steady insulin delivery. As opposed to a spike associated with simple carbohydrates, this spike will deliver the insulin to the muscles quicker. But some studies suggest if the workout did not deplete your body you are consuming excess calories basically in the form of sugar which will turn to fat stores.

Follow this link to examples of complex carbohydrates <https://www.livestrong.com/article/27398-list-complex-carbohydrates-foods/>

Simple carbohydrates are easier to identify, pretty much anything sweet— Easy right. Here is a link to examples and information on healthy simple carbohydrates.

<https://healthyeating.sfgate.com/healthy-simple-carbohydrates-6348.html>

Importance of carbohydrates post workout

1/24/2020

Use this post workout meal formula for either cutting weight or gaining muscle. Note: this is for your post workout meal ONLY and does not indicate your total daily intake of protein and carbohydrates.

Cutting formula: 2:1~ 2g carbs to 1g protein at .25grams of carbohydrates per pound (body weight). Example- at 200lb body weight the formula would be $200 \times .25 = 50$ you then take the 50g of carbs from the above solved formula and divide by 2 to get your 25g protein. Making the goal of your post workout meal to be comprised of 50g carbohydrates and 25g protein. You should choose foods that allow you to stay within your daily calorie goals.

Gaining formula: 2:1~ 2g carbs to 1g protein at .50grams of carbohydrates per pound (body weight). Example- at 200lb body weight the formula would be $200 \times .50 = 100$ you then take the 100g of carbs from the above solved formula and divide by 2 to get your 50g protein. Making the goal of your post workout meal to be comprised of 100g carbohydrates and 50g protein.

Please note—this is a suggestion based on studies of certain individuals and those with specific goals in mind who are following a specific diet plan.

I have also included two other links below you may find useful. Please let me know if you have questions and I will do my best to get you an answer!

<https://www.builtlean.com/2013/09/17/muscles-grow/#fn-19304-5>

<https://www.livestrong.com/article/124586-post-workout-meal-weight-loss/>

Check out my other helpful free downloads for Nutrition and navigating the grocery store shelves available at MikeDrobish.com