

# Mercy Sports Medicine

## Food for Thought



Athletes require adequate calories to fuel their sport and promote overall health. The mix of nutrients as well as the timing of meals and mini meals (snacks) are both important.

For an athlete not all calories are created equal. Calories that come from healthy food provide the explosive energy needed for sports. Calories from junk food result in poor performance.

Healthy carbohydrates are important to replace muscle sugar (glycogen) you use during practice and games. If you replenish regularly throughout the day you'll have a good storage of glycogen to improve performance during games. Lean proteins are important for repair of muscle tissue used during intense activity. This results in improved strength. Increased strength means better performance. Healthy fats are important for making important substances in the body. In sports meals with fats can weigh you down if eaten just prior to a game or workout.

Fuel throughout the day. This includes regular mealtimes. Also, fueling about one and half hours prior to workouts or games and about half an hour immediately after. It is a good idea to make fuel buckets in the cupboard or fridge that contain some healthy and convenient foods.

**Information provided by:**  
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#### *Five recovery mini meals:*

- Dried fruit, nuts, and dry cereal.
- Greek yogurt with fruit and granola.
- Glass of skim milk and fresh fruit
- Whole grain toast and a scrambled egg.
- Whole grain crackers with hummus and veggies.

#### *Five recovery meals:*

- Whole grain toast, eggs and fruit.
- Oatmeal with added nut butter, apples, raisins and a glass of milk.
- Stir fry with rice, chicken and vegetables.
- Bran muffin, smoothie made with banana, berries and powdered milk.
- Wrap with black beans, grated cheese, peppers, corn, salsa and avocado.

For powerful performance and a healthy body try fueling throughout the day with healthy foods. It will replenish nutrients lost during performance and may give you a winning edge!

**For more information visit**  
**[Mercyweb.org/sportsmedicine](http://Mercyweb.org/sportsmedicine)**



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