EATING FOR ANAEROBIC ACTIVITY

Your eating for anaerobic activity is different than that of an endurance athlete. The same nutrients are needed for energy, repair and growth and normal body processes. The difference is in the amounts of each.

The scientific approach to eating for athletes like sprinters and weightlifters encompasses a caloric ratio of 1:2:3. Simply, 1 part fats, 2 parts protein and 3 parts carbohydrates.

Again, the low fat content of your diet should be comprised primarily of unsaturated fats. Fats are not the energy provider during anaerobic activity so don't take in more than ten to fifteen percent of your daily calories by means of fat.

Protein intake is very important for these athletes. Since your intensity during anaerobic activity is greater than endurance, more muscle tissue is stimulated and needs to be repaired. Muscle growth and thus strength and power are important considerations for anaerobic athletes. Because heavy workloads are used, additional protein is usually required to meet these increasing demands of the muscle tissue. In most cases, protein will be used only as a small source of energy during anaerobic events.

Carbohydrates provide the major energy source for short-term training and competition. Complex carbohydrates provide for the best source of glycogen because they are the ones that most effectively refill the glycogen stores in your muscles and liver. In addition these carbohydrates elevate your blood sugar to levels sufficient for additional bouts of intense training and help to refill glycogen stores when they dwindle.

When either your stored energy falls drastically or a build-up of lactic acid occurs, temporary muscular fatigue will be experienced. If you fail to refill glycogen stores prior to your next workout, it is possible that a breakdown of muscle protein for energy can ensue. That is why it is important for strength and other similar athletes to have adequate carbohydrates in their diet along with protein.

Prior to your training sessions or competition, it is wise to consume foods with a low glycemic index for sustained blood sugar levels. This allows you to train more intensely for longer periods.

Although it is not uncommon to see athletes eating a candy bar before competition, this is not a beneficial practice. The high concentration of simple sugars found in a candy bar and thus in your blood, causes a surge of insulin release. As the insulin gets released in your blood, it promotes the uptake of sugar by your cells. This will in turn wipe out most of your blood sugar and lead to a severe drop in energy. So the candy bar is counter- productive to obtaining additional energy over the long-run.

However, if the candy bar is of a low glycemic index, the benefits of sustained blood sugar will be evident. You will have more energy for a longer period of time.

As an anaerobic athlete you should attempt to stimulate the storage of carbohydrates in your muscles while promoting repair and growth of muscle tissue and inhibiting fat build- up on your body. This can be done by following these five suggestions:

1. **Train for anaerobic activity on a regular basis.** Through intense training you stimulate increased storage of muscle and liver glycogen. This permits additional levels of energy for greater workloads.

2. **Consume five meals each day.** This will keep your blood sugar levels stable throughout your day. Complex carbohydrates should be of concern here, coupled with a low intake of fat. Your protein intake should also be spread out throughout a day's time. This allows your muscles to have available protein whenever they need it. Your post-training meal, about one hour after your workouts will also contribute to additional glycogen storage and therefore should include complex carbohydrates.

3. **Do not consume large amounts of fat.** Large amounts of fat in your diet will undoubtedly add to your

bodyfat. Along with increased chances of heart disease and mineral loss through frequent urination, excess levels of fat on your body will slow you down and prove detrimental to optimal performance.

4. **Consume low glycemic index foods 1 or 2 hours before your activity.** This practice provides for sustained blood sugar levels that permit immediate energy needed for quick, powerful muscle contractions.

5. **Consume adequate amounts of water.** Not only does this reduce your chances of dehydration but for every gram of glycogen that is stored within your muscle, three grams of water is stored along with it. Being dehydrated can mean weaker muscle contractions. So as not to become deficient in any nutrients lost due to sweating or training itself, a multi-vitamin/mineral is highly recommended.

EATING FOR STAMINA AND STRENGTH

Many sport activities rely on short bursts of power along with prolonged muscle work. This complicates the eating plan even more. Energy for anaerobic work and that for aerobic muscular work vary, but the basis for replenishing nutrients used up during your training and competition remain the same. The amounts required may differ however.

During pre- and in-season, when both endurance and short-term training is intense, refilling of energy stores must be facilitated. Glycogen storage in your muscles and liver must be filled on a daily basis in order to prepare you for the next day's training. With off-season training, when you are training less often and less intensely, you will have greater periods between workouts to refill these energy stores. Calorie requirements during this phase of training will be significantly reduced.

Complex carbohydrates provide you with the energy requirements necessary for both forms of energy production. Since you are training intensely during pre-and in-season training, additional carbohydrates are needed. As with any type of training, carbohydrates with a low glycemic index are recommended before training sessions.

Most of your energy for activities like baseball, football and basketball comes from glycogen stores and sugar in your blood. By attempting to spare the glycogen in your muscles for those bursts of energy, you will need to sustain your blood sugar levels while sparing muscle glycogen stores. A drop in blood sugar will produce fatigue no matter what mode of training you are in. So eat plenty of complex carbohydrates.

Protein needs are elevated due to intense strength training and lengthy endurance training. Quality protein will be needed throughout all phases of training for complete recuperation and additional growth.

Fat intake should be limited to unsaturated fats. No more than ten to fifteen percent of your daily caloric intake is recommended to be in the form of fats. The ratio of fats/protein/carbohydrates should be 1:2:3 for endurance/strength athletes.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR GOOD EATING

Sound athletic nutrition is not always an easy job. But it is something that every athlete should follow. Although it is not always practical to eat properly, attempts to do so will make you a better competitor.

Listed below are some suggestions to follow, for good athletic eating habits, whether you're trying to lose fat, gain muscle or simply maintain your already polished physique.

Let's get specific about the most important part of your growth program—your nutritional regimen. When you say you want to get big, what you really mean is that you want to put on more muscle without putting on any fat. Similarly, when you say you want to lose weight, what you really mean is that you want to lose fat. So, you have to follow some simple rules of good bodybuilding nutrition. These rules will aid you in fitting your caloric intake to your training and lifestyle needs in a precise manner.