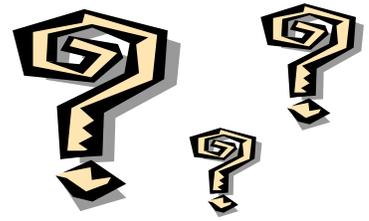


# Are You Winning at Sports Nutrition



*Trusted information on healthy eating from Dietitians of Canada*

1. Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating does not apply to athletes.

**True or False**

2. If you lose weight during a training session you have lost water, not fat.

**True or False**

3. Athletes need a diet that is high in carbohydrate, moderate in protein, and low to moderate in fat content.

**True or False**

4. Athletes should never eat in fast food restaurants if they want to maintain a proper training diet.

**True or False**

5. An athlete who is unusually tired during regular workouts may be iron deficient.

**True or False**

6. Water is always the best drink for athletes during training and competitions.

**True or False**

7. Vitamin supplements will give athletes more energy.

**True or False**

8. Eating soon after a training session or a competition is not a good idea because the body is recovering from the activity.

**True or False**

9. A high protein diet or whey protein and amino acid supplements will help produce bigger and stronger muscles.

**True or False**

10. The meal eaten just before the event provides most of the energy needed for that event.

**True or False**

## How did you score?

1. Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating does not apply to athletes.

**False** All athletes should use Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating as the starting point for planning a training diet, regardless of the sport. The Guide provides a range of daily recommendations for each of the four food groups: Grain Products; Vegetables and Fruit; Milk Products; and Meat and Alternatives. Because most athletes need more food during training, they should choose lots of high carbohydrate grains, fruits and vegetables and may use other foods in moderation to meet additional energy needs.

2. If you lose weight during a training session you have lost water, not fat.

**True** Athletes can lose a

considerable amount of water as sweat during a workout resulting in weight loss. This quick weight loss is not due to loss of fat. Athletes need to replace fluid / sweat losses in order to prevent dehydration. Dehydration will cause an athlete's performance to decline. Follow these simple rules before, during and after competition to prevent dehydration:

- Always keep your personal water bottle handy and drink lots of fluids before, during and after workouts or competitions.
- Keep track of your body fluid level by weighing yourself before and after your workout. (Weigh yourself nude – sweaty clothes will give you a false reading!) For every kilogram of weight lost, drink *at least* 1 1/2 litres of fluid.
- Avoid dehydration! Keep track of the colour and amount of your urine. If you are producing plenty of light colored urine you are doing well. Dark, concentrated, scanty urine indicates possible dehydration.

3. Athletes need a diet that is high in carbohydrate, moderate in protein, and low to moderate in fat content.

**True** Athletes should focus on getting enough complex carbohydrate to refuel the body's glycogen stores, which are used up during strenuous exercise. Also, a moderate protein and low to moderate fat intake is recommended for the best fuel mix.



**4. Athletes should never eat in fast food restaurants if they want to maintain a proper training diet.**

**False** Athletes can maintain a high carbohydrate, moderate protein and lower fat diet, even when they occasionally eat in fast food restaurants. To avoid too much fast food, pack healthy snacks as part of your nutrition tool kit. Organize a Team Nutrition Kit and include fruits, vegetables and fluids for snacks to supplement fast food meals.

**5. An athlete who is unusually tired during regular workouts may be iron deficient.**

**True** Iron is an important nutrient for carrying oxygen in the blood stream to working cells. Fatigue is a common symptom of low iron stores, often seen among female athletes. Iron deficiency may result from too little iron in your diet, so ask a Registered Dietitian to assess your diet for iron content and, if necessary, to provide advice on increasing your intake of high iron foods. See your family doctor or Sports Medicine Physician to check for iron deficiency anemia.

**6. Water is always the best drink for athletes during training and competitions.**

**False** Cool water is a *must* for athletes exercising less than one hour. But fluids such as fruit juices and sport drinks are important for exercise lasting longer than an hour, because they contain carbohydrate as well as electrolytes. Fruit juices SHOULD be diluted (one part juice to one part water) if consumed during exercise. Also during hot, humid conditions and prolonged exercise the body needs more fluids to replace sweat losses and prevent heat injury. A general guideline is to aim for a minimum of ½ -1 litre of fluid per hour.

**7. Vitamin supplements will give athletes more energy.**

**False** Vitamins themselves do not give us energy. They work along with other foods to release energy from carbohydrate, protein and fat. These food fuels and nutrients are found in the four basic food groups as well as in Other Foods in Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.

**8. Eating soon after a training session or a competition is not a good idea because the body is recovering from the activity.**

**False** For serious athletes in training or competition, it is very important to replace fluids and re-fuel muscles with carbohydrate post-event. As soon as possible (within 15 minutes to 2 hours) drink fluids, and eat carbohydrate-rich snacks and/or a post-event meal.



**9. A high protein diet or whey protein and amino acid supplements will help produce bigger and stronger muscles.**

**False** While slightly more protein is needed for building muscles, a proper strength-training program, along with adequate

energy/calorie intake, is the key. Use of whey protein and amino acid supplements can be expensive and offer no advantage over a diet providing adequate calories and protein from milk, meat, fish, chicken and legumes. Excess amounts of amino acids are not recommended and can be dangerous. Consult a Registered Dietitian, specializing in sports nutrition to determine if you are meeting the protein and energy needs for your sport.

**10. The meal eaten just before the event provides most of the energy needed for that event.**

**False** The pre-event meal is usually not as important as the daily training diet. It should be high in carbohydrate, low to moderate in protein and lower in fat to maintain energy and mental alertness for the competition. At least 2-3 hours before the event, drink fluids and eat familiar foods that are easy to digest and not too high in fibre, spices or fats.



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For more information on sport nutrition talk to a sport dietitian. Check out Dietitians of Canada award winning web site [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca) or contact the Coaching Association of Canada at [www.coach.ca](http://www.coach.ca) to identify a qualified sport dietitian.

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