

What to eat (pre-work out and post work out)?

Overall what you eat before and after your work out is secondary to what you eat and drink all the time. If you are diligent about what you eat before a workout, but don't bother to make good choices for the rest of the day, this is not going to achieve the results you are looking for.

Pre-work out nutrition

When eating before your work out the type of food, digestion requirements and intensity of your work out should be considered. Food high in fat, protein and fiber are more difficult and take longer to digest than a carbohydrate dense meal. The size of the meal will also affect digestions time.

As a general guide, having a meal should occur about 3 - 4 hours before exercise and a light snack 1-2 hours before exercise. Food eaten should generally provide some energy, be low in fat, moderate in fiber and easy to digest.

Meal suggestions for 3-4 hours before exercise are:

- Baked potato, cottage cheese and a glass of milk
- Breakfast cereal with reduced fat milk
- Fruit salad with yogurt
- Pasta or rice with a tomato based sauce

Snack suggestions for 1-2 hours before exercise are:

- Breakfast Cereal Bar
- Milk shake or fruit smoothie
- Fruit
- Nuts

Post work out nutrition

After a work out it is important to both refuel and re-hydrate your body.

Water Requirements:

- The average requirement for water intake per day is 2 liters, but this may vary depending on how much activity you are doing.
- Make sure you have your water bottle with you when exercising and that you finish it before you conclude your workout.

- Drinking plenty of fluid after exercise will also prevent you from over eating straight after your workout and give you an opportunity to choose wisely.

Food:

- Timing of post workout meals is less crucial but you should still consider the size of the meal and effect on digestion.
- It's suggested a light snack within half an hour of training, and a meal 1-2 hours post training.
- You want to choose food that will refuel your system without bogging you down.
- You want to reward your body for the good work it's done, and you want fuel that makes you feel good.
- As a general principle you want to combine some form of protein, fat and carbohydrate in your meal (protein to rebuild muscle, carbohydrate to restore energy).
- Some examples of post work out meals are:
 - Yogurt and fruit
 - Skim milk and cereal
 - Tuna wrap with salad
 - Salmon and avocado sushi rolls
 - Chicken and vegetable stir fry with rice

