

Race Day Fundamentals

Getting your race day nutrition right is vital for swimmers but can be slightly confusing at times considering how competition is spread out over the day and night, with time between races often changing from one competition to the next. As everyone enjoys and tolerates foods differently it's important to find a routine that works well for you, being committed and organised with that routine is then the next step to optimising your race day nutrition!

Nutritional priorities to recover and prepare for the next race



- ✓ Refuel (*Carbohydrates are the primary fuel that needs to be restored immediately*)
- ✓ Rehydrate (*Adequate amount of fluid to avoid dehydration*)
- ✓ Repair (*Adequate source of protein to repair muscle damage, timing maybe dependent on time until next race*)
- ✓ Rest (*Adequate rest and sleep during competition to allow for total recovery*)

Race day energy needs

Competition needs can vary significantly between swimmers; for some race day can mean only 1 race per session / day, often requirements for racing can be less than training. Care and thought is needed in the volume and amounts of your recovery choices to maintain ideal body composition over competition (especially when competition covers a week). When time is limited between races, overeating can lead to feeling full, bloated and heavy potentially impairing your performance.

It is vital to develop a plan that works well for you and allows you to be at your best!

For an individual and plan specific to your needs consult your local Sports Dietitian or Sports Nutritionist

What to eat on race day

Breakfast

Breakfast is vital for a swimmer as it is the only meal before morning competition, aim for a high carbohydrate meal 2-4 hours before racing begins, if you start extremely early you may want a slightly smaller/lighter meal 90mins prior. If nerves effect your appetite pre competition; carbohydrate rich fluids such as juices, meal replacements or low fat smoothie's / flavoured milk can boost your carbohydrate intake. Find a breakfast option that you enjoy, is readily available, practical and sits well in your stomach during competition.



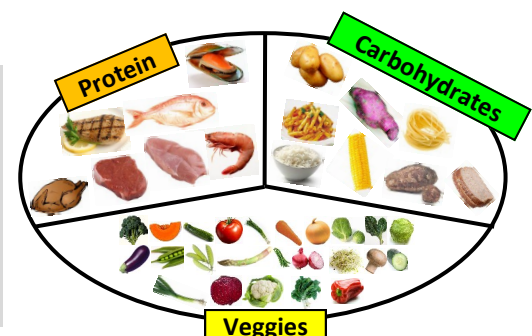
Lunch

Lunch is the main recovery meal from the morning session, so this becomes very important if you are competing again that evening. Try to schedule lunch either as soon as possible at the completion of the session or during the session if it is an all day event (you may need to bring your lunch to the pool if this is the case). If you are scheduling a sleep between sessions, ensure to have lunch before you nap to kick start this process before you sleep. Similar to breakfast, choose carbohydrate rich options combined with a protein source (lean meat, cheese, yoghurt milk etc), however avoid excessive servings of either protein or fat as this can result in consuming less carbohydrate and also feeling full and bloated as it can take longer to digest.



Dinner

During events dinner can be after or before the evening session (or both). If you are competing during the evening often a lighter dinner / snack option may suit consumed 2 hours before competition (this may be a cooked meal or a lunch type option). Keep it low in fat (added cheese, oil and pastry) and moderate in protein (lean meats). Try to include some veggie options such as salad fillings or cooked vegetables to boost the nutrient content. The athlete plate (opposite) gives a general portion guide, for those competing heavily through the day you may want to increase the carbohydrate serving.



Snack / meal idea between races



Jam / Honey / Banana sandwich
*White bread

Banana

Sports Drink
*Powerade
*Replace
*Red 8
*Mizone Isotonic (Full strength)

Muesli Bar
*Low Fat

or or

Small handful of glucose lollies

Tetra packet Fruit Juice

Wrap
*Lean meat & salad fillings

Sushi

Sub sandwich
*Low Fat

Muesli Bar
*Low Fat

Flavoured milk

Sandwich
*Lean meat & salad fillings

Creamed rice

Yoghurt

Fruit juice

Meal Replacement

Fruits

General meal options for lunch and dinner.
Important to keep it high in carbohydrate, low in fat and moderate in protein. This will allow for better digestion and the ultimate mix in fuel for recovery and preparation for upcoming races.

Hydration

Keep fluids topped up by drinking regularly throughout the session and also include water / fluid with meals. Have a drink bottle with you and carry it around the pool so you can sip without having to drink large amounts at once, this may cause stomach discomfort and cause regular urination, which may not be ideal with marshalling and racing.

Race day examples

Meal / time	Option 1	Options 2	Option 3
Wake up (Breakfast) <i>(2 hours pre race)</i>	2 x toast with Jam + Yoghurt w Juice / water	Bowl of cereal with milk Glass of juice	1 x Sustagen sport <u>or</u> 250ml flavoured milk + fruit
Post warm up (pre race)	300-500ml sports drink <i>(sip after or during warm up)</i>	1 x sports gel	1 x muesli bar <u>or</u> banana
Recovery <i>(immediately post warm down)</i>	250ml flavoured milk + banana	220g can creamed rice	500-750ml sports drink
Lunch	6-8 piece of sushi + Juice	1-2 lean meat & salad sandwich /roll + piece of fruit	Low fat pasta or rice meal, with veggies and lean meat.
Sleep (optional)			
Pre Swim meal / snack <i>(2 hours pre race)</i>	Lean meat & salad sandwich	Smaller serving of dinner meal (have rest when return home)	1 x yoghurt + banana
Post warm up (pre race)	300-500ml sports drink <i>(sip after or during warm up)</i>	1 x sports gel	Small hand full of glucose lollies 5 x jet planes / 10-15 jelly beans
Recovery snack <i>(immediately post warm down)</i>	1 x yoghurt + fruit	250ml flavoured milk + banana	220g can creamed rice
Meal	Lean meat, potatoes, veggies	Low fat pasta type meal, easy on cheese use tomato based sauce	Lean meat and veggies in wrap (burrito, fajita, soft taco)

**If multiple heats in a session, may want to add in extra easily digested snack between races.*

**Portions and amounts may differ depending on athlete circumstances (size, number of heats, distance of event etc.)*

**Keep fluid intakes up with meals and snacks - have water bottle with you at event and sip on through day/night.*