

✓ **TIP** Maximize “eating opportunities”

Many athletes don't put enough fuel in their bodies because they haven't thought ahead through the day's schedule. By taking easy-to-pack snacks like sports bars, fruit, juices, trail mix, cheese and crackers, nuts/sunflower seeds, tuna packs, and granola bars along during the day, it doesn't matter where you are or what your schedule is—you'll always be able to eat when you get a free minute. Don't be caught hungry and without fuel.

✓ **TIP** Make time for breakfast every day

Just by grabbing a peanut butter sandwich and a banana when you head out the door in the morning, you can add over 400 calories to your daily intake. In one month, that small change could potentially equal three pounds of weight gain! Since time is often a big issue with athletes on the run, remember that breakfast doesn't need to be eaten sitting down. To get one step ahead, pack a sandwich, a bagel with cream cheese, or a cereal bar with yogurt and a juice box before you go to bed.

What should I be eating?

Protein

Include protein in most of your meals and snacks. In addition to playing many other important roles in training and recovery, it is the building block of new muscle tissue. Protein sources include meats, fish, chicken, turkey, eggs, milk, yogurt, soy foods, nuts, and beans.

Carbohydrates

Some athletes put too much focus on protein when trying to gain weight. Don't forget that carbohydrates are not only important for fueling your workouts (including weight lifting), but are required for making new muscle, too. Each meal and snack should contain carbs.

Best choice HIGH ENERGY carbohydrates:

- ☒ Pasta, rice, breads, cereals, rolls, bagels, muffins, and tortillas (wheat, oat, or bran when possible)
- ☒ Starchy veggies (corn, peas, potatoes, and sweet potatoes)
- ☒ 100% fruit juices or smoothies
- ☒ Dried fruits like raisins, raisins, dried apricots, dried cherries, dried pineapple, and dried papaya
- ☒ Sports bars with at least 20 grams of carbohydrate per bar

Think drinks!

High-calorie beverages are an easy way to add calories without feeling stuffed. Drink a big glass of juice or milk (or a milkshake) when you get up in the morning. Carry bottles of high-calorie juices like grape, cranberry, pineapple, apple, or juice blends (strawberry-orange-banana, cran-grape) with you during the day. Drink sports drinks in place of water with meals—you'll stay well hydrated while getting in extra calories. At restaurants, order milkshakes, juices, or drinks like lemonade or punch. Enjoy fruit smoothies (prepared with milk or yogurt for added protein). Blend up a homemade milkshake with ice cream, milk, and frozen fruit before going to bed to boost calories by at least 500 per day.

Make big gains through recovery nutrition

Your body is best at using nutrients to restore energy, build muscle, and adapt to training when taken in immediately after workouts. Get in 500 calories right after workouts (within 30 minutes), with 2/3 of those calories coming from carbohydrate and 1/3 coming from protein.