

FACT SHEET 2 GLASGOW SCHOOL OF SPORT FOCUS ON FUEL

Training, practice, fitness, skill, mental awareness and talent- these things will all help you become the best athlete you can be. Your diet is no exception.

The aim of a good diet for your sport is to arrive at your next session, fully hydrated and refuelled. Food is fuel and we can store a bit in our muscles but we only have small amounts.

It's a bit like a car engine, every time you drive you use some petrol up- every time you train you use up your muscle fuel sources.

Just think about how many training sessions you have, and other exercise you may do – during PE or other sports. The only way to refuel these stores is by eating the right foods.

The most important food for an athlete is carbohydrate (see below) There is no such thing as good or bad carbohydrates both are equally valuable for different aspects of fuel for your sport.

There are plenty of opportunities to refuel before a training session so make sure you arrive with a full store of carb's.

Foods high in sugary carbohydrate	Foods high in starchy carbohydrate
Sugar	Pasta
Honey	Rice
Sweets (Jelly babies)	Potatoes
Dried fruit	Noodles
Bananas	Bread
Fresh orange	Cereals
Sports drinks	Oat cakes/ crackers
Biscuits	Bagels
Jaffa Cakes	beans
Cereal Bars	

Try to make most of your meals based on starchy carbohydrate and use sugary carbohydrate to refuel quickly after training sessions.

The general rule is to try and eat sugary-based foods as soon after exercise as possible. Then keep refuelling with your main meals.

Try to keep the fat content of your meals as low as possible. (Less chips, fried foods, pies – only have these now and again)

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Fluids are really important. If it isn't low fuel stores, which will cause you to be tired, it will be dehydration. There is no first sign of dehydration there is only prevention. During training and games, as with refuelling there should be plenty of time to rehydrate.

A good way of checking your hydration levels is to check your weight before and after training sessions. For every 1kg weight loss replace with 1.5litres of fluid. E.g. 500g loss replace with 750ml

Water is a good hydration fluid. However using a sports drink can speed up hydration. Sports drinks will also give some fuel. There are many on the market, but in general they are usually Hypotonic, Isotonic or Hypertonic.

Hypotonic drinks are usually between 3-4% carbs, with some sodium. An example is lucozade hydroactive. These are ok for hydration before, during and after exercise. The focus of these drinks is hydration rather than refuelling so for warmer environments is ideal.

Isotonic drinks are usually between 5-7% carbs, with some sodium. An example is powerade. These are ok for hydration before, during and after exercise. The focus of these drinks is refuelling as well as hydration.

Hypertonic drinks are usually around 10% carbs, not all contain sodium. An example may be red bull or cola. These are usually used purely for refuelling, however with caution as they can make dehydration worse.

Make your Own!

Hypotonic drinks

100ml fruit squash (ordinary)
900ml water,
1-1.5g (pinch salt)

250ml fruit juice
750ml water
1-1.5g (pinch salt)

Isotonic drinks

200ml squash (ordinary)
800ml water
1-1.5g (pinch salt)

500ml of fruit juice
500ml water
1-1.5g (pinch salt)