

Good Post Workout Strategies

My analogy that I use when I talk about sports nutrition is this. "if you have a race car that can run 200 mph on good gas and 180 mph on crappy gas, why would you use crappy gas if you were going into a race, Athletes spend all of their time fine tuning their engines (bodies) to develop more horsepower and in order to maximize their horsepower they need to fuel the body appropriately. An athlete can make or break all of their training gains, by how they eat on race day.

Here is some nutrition coaching advice that I preach frequently. My advice below is geared more around recovery and regeneration, there is a lot of information that is out there for athletes on how to eat to race and how to eat to compete, but often the recovery component (in my opinion) is taken for granted and can be just as important as pre-fueling, especially during the season or during stressful training blocks.

Glass of milk before bed

Casein is protein in milk that is rarely found in other foods, it has a very complex chemical structure, this complex makeup requires more time for the body to digest. This slow digestion process creates the perfect environment for healing tissues. As casein is slowly digested, small amounts of protein are released into the blood stream over many hours. This is much different than highly marketed products such as whey protein, whey protein is a good source of protein, but is absorbed rapidly and does not stay in the system long. Whey protein is for post workout, but tissue recovery/healing and rebuilding can take up to 72 hours, dependent upon the amount of muscular damage caused from training stress. Casein's slow digestion provides the tissues the building blocks they need to heal throughout the night.

Peanut butter (all natural)/ honey and banana sandwiches on multi-grain/whole wheat bread (post-workout)

I recommend this combo of food, not only because it tastes amazing, but because the body needs all of these unique ingredients. After workouts, the body craves salt and sugar, this sandwich satisfies the cravings and packs power benefits. The banana provides high doses of potassium, a good source of fiber and contains many B-vitamins, the peanut butter provides sodium, protein, a dense source of high needed calories and is a great source of unsaturated fats, which help promote improved cardiovascular efficiency, the honey provides the rapidly absorbing sugar to re-

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stabilize blood sugar stores immediately and the whole wheat bread promotes replenishment of depleted glycogen stores and adds for added fiber.

Stay away from simple sugars a few hours before bed

Everyone knows to stay away from simple sugars for the most part, with the exception of post workout. But eating simple sugars near bedtime can interrupt the healing and recovery process of skeletal muscle. Simple sugars promote the body to secrete insulin. Interestingly enough, insulin causes suppression in the secretions of naturally occurring growth hormone. Growth hormone is released into the blood stream while we are in our deepest sleep. It is the driving force behind tissue recovery. It is responsible for much more than just muscle repair and healing. It promotes the regeneration of all cells in the body such as: skin and blood. This information can be very powerful for athletes who demand the most out their bodies day after day. If the body is unable to repair itself from the physical damage from day after day, an athlete's performance will slowly begin to suffer.