

NUTRITIONAL GUIDELINES BEFORE TRAINING & COMPETITION

The goals of food and supplement intake before exercise is to ensure that the exercise session is started with optimal energy (or blood glucose) and hydration levels, without experiencing gastrointestinal discomfort e.g. diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and flatulence. General guidelines provided here may require fine-tuning depending on:

- Training phase or competition schedule
- Duration of exercise
- Type of exercise
- Time of day
- Environmental factors (e.g. ambient temperature)
- Individual preferences

Carbo-loading may play an integral part food and supplement intake before events for endurance athletes. Endurance athletes, please refer to the [carbo-loading guidelines](#).

Balanced Meal:

Food and fluid consumed before exercise is only useful once it has been digested and absorbed. This means that you need to consume food and fluid in advance. It is generally recommended to consume meals 2-3 hours before exercise. When this is not practical, have a meal 4-5 hours before exercise, followed by a top-up meal 2-3 hours before exercise.

Guidelines:

- Ensure adequate calorie and carbohydrate intake.
- Include slow and/ or intermediate releasing carbohydrates.
- Include moderate amounts of protein.
- Consume fluid according to thirst.
- Avoid large quantities of fat and fibre.
- Avoid foods that you are allergic/ intolerant and those known to upset your stomach.
- Avoid foods that cause flatulence e.g. legumes, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, cucumber, onions, etc.

Examples:

- **PVM MEALIE MEAL MIX** + banana
- Oats + Skimmed milk + banana
- Muesli + low fat yoghurt + banana
- Rye/ Brown bread + lean ham/ low fat cheese/ lean beef hamburger patty + salad/veggies
- Rice/ Pasta/ Couscous + lean beef strips/chicken strips/ tuna in brine + vegetables

If you are not able to eat solid food e.g. due to nerves or unavailability of food:

- **FUSION DRINK** + 1 **PVM ENERGY BAR**/ fruit/ skimmed milk/ low fat yoghurt **OR**
- **FUSION MASS**

In addition, you may drink water or diluted fruit juice.

Top-Up Meal:

When your last meal was ≥ 4 h ago, a top-up meal may be required. Choose from:

- **PVM Energy/ iSnack Bar**
- Muffins (preferably not bran)/ scones/ flapjacks/ pancakes/ white bread + syrup/ jam/low fat cheese/ cottage cheese
- Bananas/ peaches/ canned fruit

In addition, you may drink water or diluted fruit juice.

Supplements (30-60 minutes before exercise):

Please refer to sport-specific guidelines.

Should I avoid eating before exercise when I want to loose weight?

The answer to this question depends on your goal for the session. Exercising on an empty stomach (8 hours since last meal) results in a greater proportion of fat being used as fuel compared to doing the same type of exercise after a carbohydrate-containing meal or snack. However, it is possible that you may be able to exercise harder and for a longer period when a carbohydrate is consumed before exercise.

This may result in greater energy usage which will help the body to shift towards a negative energy balance needed to achieve weight loss. Thus, if your goal is to improve performance, have something to eat. If your goal is weight loss and you will do the same amount of exercise regardless of whether you eat or not, save your meal until after the session.