

## Bari-athletes: Key Nutritional Tips



- It is still important that your breakfast, lunch and dinner are predominantly protein-based (*i.e. meat/seafood/chicken/eggs*) followed by non-starchy (green) vegetables, and a small amount of carbohydrate (*i.e. 1 tbsp potato/corn/kumara*).
- If eating carbohydrate foods for fuel before a race, always ensure they are high-quality (*i.e. potato or kumara with the skin left on, fruit, quinoa, oats or grainy bread*). Never eat them in isolation – Include a complete protein like meat, chicken or eggs, and some green vegetables. These help with satiety, muscle repair and faster recovery from training sessions or events. Low-quality carbohydrate choices include white pasta, white bread, rice crackers, noodles...
- Suitable pre- and post-race/training meals include;
  - 2 egg omelette with diced ham, grated cheese and green vegetables of your choice.
  - 1 egg with 2-3 tbsp lite baked beans and 1-2 small lean meat patties or slices of rindless bacon.
  - 1-2 poached eggs on 1 slice of Vogel's Thin toast with 1-2 tbsp lite baked beans.
  - Protein shake made with 2 scoops protein powder (*i.e. Celebrate Protein 20*), Calci-Trim milk, 2-3 tbsp unsweetened natural or Greek yoghurt, ½ cup frozen berries.
  - 2 Weetbix with Calci-Trim milk, 2-3 tbsp yoghurt (unsweetened natural or Greek), 1 scoop protein powder (*i.e. Celebrate Protein 20*) and 1 kiwifruit.
- If you train or compete in events taking more than 1.5-2 hours at a time, you may need to introduce extra protein snacks into that day to help with providing you enough protein and energy.
- If your training session is less than 1½ hours but will be high-intensity and it has been more than 4-5 hours since your last meal, you may also need an extra protein snack (*preferably 30-60 minutes before your session*) to give you enough energy and strength for training to your full potential.
- Exercising less than 1½ hours does not warrant any extra protein snacks unless your weight is dropping below your personal happy range.
- Suitable protein snack options which include carbohydrate are;
  - 1x 250ml glass of Calci-Trim (14.7g protein) /Anchor Protein Plus milk.
  - 1x 250ml protein shake made with 1-2 scoops protein powder (*i.e. Celebrate Protein 20*) and Calci-Trim /Anchor Protein Plus milk.
  - 1x 250ml protein shake made with 1-2 scoops protein powder and water or pure coconut water.
  - 1x 250ml smoothie made with Calci-Trim milk, unsweetened natural or Greek yoghurt and ½ cup frozen berries. *Optional: add 2 heaped tsp protein powder.*
  - 1x sliced ham wrapped around 20g noble/edam cheese.
  - ½ cup plain unsweetened natural or Greek yoghurt with 2-3 tsp flavoured protein powder.
  - 1x 85g tin tuna/salmon with 1tbsp cottage cheese or Philadelphia Extra-light cream cheese.
  - 1x 30-50g Biltong (lean dried meat) – *n.b. will not provide any carbohydrates.*
- Suitable protein snacks during endurance events such as 6-hour bike rides include;
  - Protein powder (*i.e. Celebrate Protein 20*) mixed with water/pure coconut water.
  - Protein bars – Chopping these up before your race can help with ease of intake too (*n.b. the Celebrate range of bars have a texture that are easier to eat than others like Aussie Bodies Protein FX which require more chewing*).
- Keep hydrated! You will need more than 2L of fluid per day if you are doing endurance events. One way to gauge your fluid replacement needs after an event or training session is to weigh yourself before and after the session – for every 100g lost, replace with 100mls fluid and aim to include salt to help the rehydration process (*i.e. Powerade Zero, Oxo stock cube with water, Miso soup*).
- You can minimise fluid replacement needs by drinking before, during and after exercise, but remember to take your time with rehydrating afterwards. Drinking too much, too soon can disrupt the electrolyte balance of your cells (*i.e. sodium, potassium and chloride levels get diluted*).
- Pure coconut water is a great electrolyte replacing beverage to have before, during, or after exercise as it is rich in sodium and potassium. It can be consumed as it is or added to a protein shake instead of milk (*n.b. avoid the flavoured varieties of coconut water*).
- What works for one person may not necessarily work for another. Finding the balance between what you eat, good energy levels, and weight management will be a case of trial and error. Extra protein snacks to support your activity levels need to be weight dependent to avoid unwanted

weight regain or loss. Weigh yourself regularly (*i.e.* 1-2x/wk) and remove one of the snacks if you notice your weight increasing. To the contrary, you may need an extra protein snack during the day if your weight continues to drop and goes below your happy range.

- On rest days or when your training is for shorter periods of time, remove any extra protein snacks and ensure your three main meals are protein-rich.
- When testing for tolerance to certain foods for including with your training sessions, consider keeping a food and symptom diary to capture what you ate, how much energy you had during training, whether you experienced any digestive issues (*i.e.* *bloating, gas, pain/discomfort*), whether you felt hungry during your training, and how recovered you felt the following day. This will help to guide you with what foods suit you best.
- It can also be helpful to plan your training sessions around meal times to ensure you have optimal energy levels for your activity without the need to snack beforehand or suffer digestion issues from having a main meal right before your exercise.
- Personal trainers/exercise physicians have some fantastic tips for healthy eating, but remember they lack experience or knowledge in bariatrics – often being unaware of the metabolic and physiological changes that affect the amount and type of foods you can eat. If their advice conflicts with our guidelines, then please ignore their advice and follow our guidelines.
- Listen to your body! While we encourage regular exercise and support our patients to enter sporting events, some may be more affected by bariatric surgery than others in terms of recovery time. Aim to begin with a smaller event and build up to bigger, more intensive events as you feel able to. At all stages, enjoy the endorphins (*'feel-good' factor*) that come with exercise.
- Watch this space! Research is limited and more is needed among athletes having undergone bariatric surgery. As more becomes known, guidelines for optimal nutrition can change.

