Science tells us that it is best for athletes to have a “food first” approach. Always stick to real, wholesome foods for day-to-day nutrition. There may be times when you need to supplement your diet because of the demands placed on your body and to meet the challenges of performance fueling.

**SPORTS FOODS**

Sports foods are engineered to provide precise nutrients and quantities, making them reliable choices for athletes. Your body needs three key components for prolonged exercise: carbohydrates, electrolytes and fluid. These nutrients can come from easily digested food choices or sports foods. Sports foods are convenient and easy to eat. Be sure to test them during training to assess what works best for you.

**SPORTS DRINKS**

- **30-60 min** Meets needs
- **60-90 min** Meets needs
- **>90 min** Needed for hydration, but won’t meet carbohydrate needs
- **30-60 min after exercise** Replenish depleted fluid and carbohydrate stores

**SPORTS BARS**

- **30-60 min** May cause GI upset
- **60-90 min** Only if needed
- **>90 min** Choose bars that are carb-based, low in protein, fat and fiber
- **30-60 min after exercise** Choose bars that are carb-based with ample protein

**GELS, CHEWS, BEANS**

- **30-60 min** Only if needed
- **60-90 min** Meets needs
- **>90 min** Consume at regular intervals, ensure proper hydration for digestion
- **30-60 min after exercise** May cause GI upset, no protein

**FOOD EXAMPLES**

- **30-60 min** Water, dates, raisins, honey
- **60-90 min** Only if needed
- **>90 min** Water and dried fruit, pretzels, bananas, oranges
- **30-60 min after exercise** Chocolate milk, whey protein smoothie with fruit, milk and balanced meal

**Training Intensity Levels**

- High
- Low-moderate
**THE STORY ON SUPPLEMENTS**

Athletes commonly look for supplements to give them an edge. Some supplements have valid benefits for athletes, but many are risky and could potentially cause harm.

**REMEMBER:** Supplements are NOT regulated and may contain substances not listed on the label. It is the sole responsibility of the athlete to know what they are ingesting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dietary Ingredient</th>
<th>Potential Actions and Side Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whey Protein</td>
<td>May lead to an increase in lean body mass in response to key training sessions or resistance exercise. Activates and stimulates muscle production and growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beta-Alanine</td>
<td>May buffer muscle acid and enhance muscular endurance. Can cause parathesia (tingling of the skin). Side effects depend on dosage and body weight of the individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caffeine</td>
<td>May improve endurance and high-intensity exercise, mental sharpness and reaction time, stimulates central nervous system. Side effects include jitters, nausea, rapid heart rate, poor sleep, anxiety. Synthetic caffeine sources can exceed limits set by governing bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creatine Monohydrate</td>
<td>Can increase max power output, explosive strength and lean muscle mass. High doses contribute to water retention and bloating, may cause diarrhea or nausea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrates (Beetroot Juice/Powders)</td>
<td>Impacts blood flow through vasodilation, may improve aerobic endurance. Can change urine and stool color, increased risk of kidney stones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omega-3 Fatty Acids</td>
<td>May reduce inflammation, soreness and speed injury recovery. Some evidence of enhanced brain health. In high doses, may lead to hypoglycemia, bleeding, low blood pressure, loose stools, nausea, or fishy breath.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tart Cherry Juice</td>
<td>Blunts inflammatory response and aids in recovery, reduces muscle soreness. Very high amounts may lead to diarrhea and GI distress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamin D</td>
<td>May aid in lean body composition, supports immunity, bone health and reduced inflammation. Megadoses can be toxic, leading to high calcium in the blood, poor appetite, nausea, vomiting and kidney problems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HOW DO I KNOW IT’S SAFE?**

Athletes can check the safety of supplements by looking for logos from third-party testing agencies. There is no 100% guarantee with any supplement. Speak with a sports dietitian for guidance.

- www.nsfsport.com
- www.informed-choice.org
- www.consumerlab.com
- www.usp.org
- www.aegisshield.com

For more information on how to fuel your everyday greatness, scan the QR code or visit: Greatness.Unbottled.com