



# Top Foods to Fuel when on the Move

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*Jen works with ICyF to provide expert advice on sports nutrition and healthy eating to the students and families of Indianola. As a board-certified sports dietitian, Jen owns a private practice that focuses on helping athletes stay on the cutting edge with superior nutrition to enhance performance with safety and efficacy.*

Late night events and weekend tournaments are no longer considered special circumstances; they are the norm. It is especially critical to fuel your body appropriately during tournament play since you are usually competing several times a day without optimal recovery time. Having the right food and fluids readily accessible to athletes can make the difference between a championship and an early exit. With the support of food manufacturers and healthy options at many fast food and chain restaurants, it is possible to eat healthfully when on the move.

## Tips for Food & Fluid when on the Move

### Stocking the beverage cooler\*

- bottled water / flavored waters (watch carbonation)
- coconut water
- electrolyte drinks or powders that pre-mix with water
- sports drinks (zero added sugar and regular when advised)
- 100% juice
- low-fat chocolate milk

### Stocking the refrigerated food cooler\*

- lunch meat sandwiches or wraps
- peanut butter and jelly/ honey sandwiches or wraps
- string cheese, cheese cubes
- low-fat yogurt or Greek yogurt tubes
- frozen fruit bars
- individual cups sherbet
- hard-boiled eggs
- batch of pre-made waffles or pancakes
- pre-cut veggies with hummus

\* To prevent food borne illnesses always maintain a cooler temperature of below 40 degrees.

### Stocking dry-food cooler

- sports bars & nutrition bars
- pretzels
- fresh fruit, dried fruit, fruit cups
- bagels
- peanut butter or almond butter
- hummus with veggies
- whole grain crackers
- Erin Baker's Wholesome Breakfast Cookie®
- Homemade energy balls
- Valley® popcorn or cereal mixed with dried fruit & peanuts
- baked potato chips
- rice cakes or corn cakes
- graham crackers
- dried 100% fruit strips
- sunflower seeds



## Convenience Stores & Vending

Sometimes we fail to plan and have very limited choices on how we can fuel our body. These situations are certainly not ideal. However, eating something is often better than nothing. To promote stomach emptying and optimal fuel utilization, select foods that are familiar, carbohydrate rich and low in fiber and fat.

### In a pinch list

- Bottled water or cup of ice water
- Fountain cup with extra ice
- 100% fruit juices
- Sports drink
- Hoard-boiled eggs
- Fresh fruit or deli sandwich
- Low-fat chocolate milk
- Fresh Fruit (if available)
- Packaged turkey sandwich on wheat bread
- Packaged peanut butter crackers
- dry cereal with low-fat milk
- Box of crackers (Wheat Thins® or Triscuits®)
- Baked chips or pretzels
- String cheese
- Harvest Crisp® varieties
- Smartfood® popcorn
- Peanut butter sandwich. Purchase a loaf of bread and jar of peanut butter
- Granola bars (Rx bar® gomacro® Nature Valley®, Clif® )

**Note: some of these foods are not ideal but pose a better choice than other high fat convenience foods. The best weapon for proper fueling is to plan ahead. Remember to never eat anything you've never eaten in the day leading up to competition to prevent gastrointestinal upset.**

## How much should I eat?

Now that you have your cooler stocked with superior foods for fueling, it's important to know how much you need for peak performance. This answer is really based on the intensity of the sport and your individual physiology. A sports nutritionist can develop a specified plan for you. However, some general tips include:

- Eat a variety of the familiar foods offered.
- Skip an unfamiliar food or drink you have never tried during sport travel to avoid the possibility of stomach upset.
- Eat enough to feel satisfied but not overly full.
- Eat slowly. Eating too fast does not allow your body to properly respond to the food eaten. It takes about 20-30 minutes from the time you begin eating before you will even start to notice whether you are getting full.
- Take sips of liquid while you eat. Hydration is equally important.
- If you have a touchy stomach and food doesn't appeal to you, sip sports drinks to assist in muscle glycogen synthesis.
- The closer you are to your next event, the less you should eat to avoid stomach upset. If competition ends and another begins within an hour, you may need to continue to fuel during your next activity.



## Basic Tips for Healthier Fast-Food Eating

### McDonald's®

- Order two hamburgers instead of one super sandwich ( Big Mac® ) to increase carbohydrate and decrease fat and calories.
- Skip the fries and enjoy something healthier. Instead order apple slices with a smoothie or extra hamburger.
- Always request a cup of ice water or purchase bottled water.
- For breakfast order the hotcakes (easy on butter) or the Egg McMuffin® sandwich. Have your own fruit handy or order a fruit smoothie.
- Good beverage choices include water, low-fat milk, low-fat chocolate milk, 100% juice, smoothies.
- Omit “special sauces” creamy salad dressings and mayonnaise. Opt for ketchup, mustard, BBQ sauce, vinaigrette, low-fat mayonnaise
- Grilled instead of fried is always the better choice

### Taco Bell ®

- Soft shell taco instead of hard shell
- Chicken tacos instead of beef
- Rice or black beans are better sides versus refried beans since restaurants often add lard to refried beans.
- Fajitas are often a better choice than a burrito, chimichanga or enchilada.
- Ask for extra salsa. Salsa is an ideal sauce for any Mexican dish.

### Arby's®

- Classic Roast Beef Sandwich at Arby's® is your best sandwich option. Order with apple slices and chocolate or white milk.

### Subway®

- High fat meats to omit on your sub sandwiches include; pepperoni, Italian sausage, Philly style steak, bacon, meatballs, salami. Good choices: turkey, roast beef, ham, tuna and chicken breast.
- Order baked chips or pretzels instead of regular potato chips. Skip the cookie to avoid feeling sluggish from the sugar.

### Panera®

- Select broth based soups instead of creamy. Ask to substitute sourdough bread if your sandwich comes with asiago to decrease fat intake.
- Ask for two sides (apple + French roll) instead of dessert.
- Bagels with light cream cheese are a good carbohydrate-rich choice.
- Limit breakfast sandwiches with bacon, sausage and cheese. Choose breakfast sandwiches with eggs, ham and vegetables instead.
- Quiche dishes are typically low in carbohydrates and loaded with fat so not a good option for an athlete.
- Oatmeal with fruit is a good option at any time of day.
- Order white milk, chocolate milk or a fruit smoothie instead of soda or specialty coffee drinks.



### **Chick-Fil-A®**

- Select classics that are not breaded. Chargrilled chicken sandwich, chargrilled chicken club sandwich or grilled chicken nuggets are better choices.
- For sides choose fruit cup or salad.
- If you decide to get dessert, the mini-sundae is your best choice.

### **Basic Tips for Sit-Down Dining**

- Make sure that your water glass is staying full.
- When fuel needs are high, order a basket of plain bread to share.
- Choose meals that focus on carbohydrate choices such as rice or pasta with the exception of rich lasagnas or risottos. Opt for sauces without cream, such as a marinara sauce. Get whole grain pasta, if available.
- If your main course is steak, fish or poultry, order a baked potato or sweet potato for a side combined with a vegetable and salad. Ask for vinaigrette or balsamic based dressings on the side.
- Select steamed rice instead of fried rice. Order dishes from the menu made with vegetables and chicken that has not been fried.
- Select pizza with ham and vegetables. Ask for less cheese. Although your carbohydrate needs are higher, still ask for thin crust since hand tossed crust and thick crust contain excess saturated fat.

Most restaurants now have nutrition facts online or free apps. Visit the restaurant's website BEFORE you order to discover additional healthy options.

**NOTE:** Proper fueling when away from home is critical yet may have many moving parts to a plan. Especially with picky eaters and those with dietary restrictions. If you have questions, concerns or would like a specified nutrient-timing plan, please contact Jen DeWall RDN, CSSD, LD to schedule a complimentary 15-minute sports nutrition coaching call.

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