



Sport-Specific Nutrition: Golf

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Jen works with ICYP 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.

Golf is a game of precision, accuracy and skill. Successful golfers can vary greatly in overall physical fitness level and size. However, in recent years, top sports institutes suggest carrying excess weight may make a golfer more susceptible to physical fatigue, heat intolerance and injury. (1) Golfers of all levels require a diet that provides a variety of healthy foods. Golfers should consume diets that have moderate amounts of carbohydrate, adequate protein and are low in saturated and trans fat.

• Focus on nutrient dense carbohydrates.

Golfers do not need as many carbohydrates as other athletes that are burning more calories in training. Therefore when carbohydrates are consumed, select those that are going to offer the most nutrition and limit starchy, refined foods.

Carbohydrate choice	Better carbohydrate choice
bagel	whole-wheat toast, English muffin or flat bread
rice	quinoa
100 % orange juice	orange
Pop - Tart®	Special K® breakfast sandwich
Soda/sports drink	plain water
candy bar	almonds or peanuts
french fries/ potato chips	baked chips
white pasta	Whole grain pasta
crackers	Veggies and hummus
Sugary cereal	Oatmeal, healthier cereals*
* Healthier cereals found on ICYP "Athlete Shopping List" guide.	

• Eat lean protein

Eat enough protein to build and/or maintain muscle. Lean protein sources include fat free and low fat dairy products, lean meat, beans and eggs. For a more detailed list see the ICYP "Athlete Shopping List." Golfers should be consuming at least 1 gram of protein per kilogram of bodyweight and no more than 1 gram of protein per pound of bodyweight each day.

Weight (pounds)	Daily Protein Range (grams)
140	64 - 120
150	68 - 130
165	75 - 150
180	81 - 160
200	90 - 180

• Hydrate

Look after fluid needs. The body needs to be hydrated to perform optimally. Golfers should sip small amounts of fluid during training and regularly throughout the day. Carry a water bottle with you during the day to help achieve your fluid goals. One sip of water is equal to about 1 ounce. Most high school golfers should be consuming at least 70 ounces of water daily.

• Don't play hungry

Being properly fueled before walking onto the course is important. Your pre-game fuel should leave you neither full nor hungry. Think about *when* you last ate. If it's been more than 3-4 hours, a small, healthy snack would more than likely benefit you. A list of healthy snacks can be found on the ICYP "On the Go Snacks for Athletes" guide. It is important to remember that each individual is different. Don't forget to trust your gut. Everyone reacts to foods differently so do not try any new or unfamiliar foods pre-competition. For additional information, contact a sports dietitian/nutritionist in your area.



References

1. Australian Government. Australian Sports Commission. www.ausport.gov.au October 2013.