

Pre Match Meals

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so some of you will get up late on a Saturday morning, nursing a hangover, running around looking for the sock that has mysteriously vanished from planet earth. You thought your kit had been washed but you realize that you have not opened the kitbag since last Saturday.

You unzip the bag and realize that you should have opened the window first. The kit stinks; you chuck it on the radiator to remove some of the muskiness while you raid the fridge for something to eat that will stop you throwing up.

Now if the sport went pro then your regime might be a little different- Good nights sleep followed by a pre-match meal. Our friends at the, The Centre of Nutritional Medicine give you a little guidance on pre-match meals.

Pre match meals, good things to eat and when to eat.

What sort of foods should I eat before a game to get the energy I need?

Carbohydrates are the most immediately usable and rate limiting energy source for sporting endeavors, and you need to make sure your glycogen levels (the stored form of energy in the muscles and liver) are kept topped up by eating small frequent meals 5-6 each day.

The best sort of carbohydrates to look for in these meals are those with a low rate of absorption, which means limiting refined sources of carbohydrate like white bread, sugars, confectionery and any food with a high glycemic index* and eating plenty of unrefined carbohydrates including whole grains, vegetables, salad and foods with a lower glycemic index.

An example of a pre-match meal might contain a medium serving of brown rice, 1-2 chicken breasts, some peas and carrots with a small amount of sauce to flavor things up a bit. Having 1-2 cup of water with this would be a good idea too. Ideally this meal should be eaten 3-4 hours before the match with an additional small snack 1 ½ to 2 hours before the game this should be higher in carbohydrates than in protein and could involve a yoghurt, banana and a couple of pieces of rye toast. Care should be taken with adequate fluid intake leading up to and during the match and you may want to include a small amount of electrolyte or carbohydrate based drink during this time adding a little protein powder from whey protein is also a good idea because this supplies the amino acids needed for proper muscle recuperation and repair.

Refueling after the game is especially important particularly if you are used to training hard during the week and do something sporty most days. When refueling we like to use quick releasing sugars for rapid energy replenishment. These can come from bananas, grapes, bread and honey or from specially formulated drinks such as Rapid Recovery.