

September 2023 Nutrition Newsletter
Written by McKenna Welshans, RD, LDN

Who is counting down the days until Fall Break? If you're like me, you've already noted the fact that we are a month into the semester and there's a month left until break. In addition to that, autumn solstice is this Saturday! The intensity of the semester is ramping up, which usually makes it increasingly difficult to manage all aspects of our routine. As your campus dietitian, I am here to support you in this process and remind you of a few key aspects to your diet that will fuel you for the academic demands you are facing.

Four fueling tips for a well-nourished semester:

1. Aim to eat within 1-2 hours of waking up and every 2-4 hours throughout the day when you feel hungry. Creating consistency in our eating can regulate our appetite and energy levels throughout a busy day.
2. Pair multiple food groups together at meals and snacks to create energy balance. Different foods have varying types of energy. Grain and fruit-based foods tend to be some of our highest-carbohydrate sources, while nuts, seeds, dairy, and animal products are notorious for containing more fat and protein. Our bodies need all three energy types consistently throughout the day. When snacking, create pairings such as an apple with a handful of almonds, a banana with peanut butter, whole grain crackers with a cheese stick, trail mix, veggies with Ranch dip/hummus, or a Greek yogurt/fruit parfait to provide the quick energy from carbs and the sustaining energy from fat/protein that carry you through to your next meal. At meals, the same principle applies, but try to create a more robust plate with at least 3 food groups when you can. Refer to the plate photo below created by Gatorade Sports Science Institute for a visual representation of this. Lottie Nelson Dining Hall is the best space on campus to follow this pattern and variety of eating.
3. Keep hydrating! Our bodies are made up of 60% water and we are constantly losing it throughout the day. Dehydration happens easily and can contribute to fatigue, brain fog, increased appetite, and headaches. Be sure to incorporate fluids (primarily water) with meals and snacks and aim to carry a water bottle with you in your backpack throughout the day. A good baseline goal is roughly 64 ounces of water intake, but the majority of people will benefit from more like 80-100 ounces daily. Fruits, vegetables, broth-based soups, herbal tea, and milk all contribute to hydration status and can be good additions as well.
4. Keep moving and fuel that movement. Find a form of physical activity that you enjoy and build it into your weekly routine. It will help you sleep better, focus more, feel less stressed and have a more regulated appetite. When engaging in physical activity, your body does best when you've had a meal within 3-4 hours prior to exercise as well as a carbohydrate-based snack 15-60 minutes beforehand, such as crackers, pretzels, toast, fruit, etc. On the back end of the exercise bout, combine carbohydrate-rich foods with

proteins to replenish what you used and provide the building blocks for post-workout muscle recovery, ideally within an hour of finishing the exercise. Your body will thank you for giving it the tools to work hard and the result often looks like having more energy to push through the workout as well as reduced soreness afterwards. Because your body has a higher carbohydrate need on days you are more physically active, the recommended proportion of your food on your plate changes from that of a sedentary day. Refer to the differences between the two plates below.

Nourishing our bodies is an art that requires flexibility and realistic expectations. There is no perfect way to do it, but along the way be sure to take time to listen to your body and embrace habits that make it feel strong and energized. The learning process never stops, so have fun with it! Come see me in the Engle Center if you have more questions about nourishing your body well.

THE ATHLETE'S PLATE EASY TRAINING DAY

Lower intensity workout, tapering, weight loss, or sports requiring less calorie expenditure.

GATORADE
THE SPORTS FUEL COMPANY

GRAINS + CARBS 25%

- Pasta
- Rice
- Potatoes
- Cereals
- Breads
- Legumes

LEAN PROTEIN 25%

- Poultry
- Beef/Game/Lamb
- Fish
- Eggs
- Low-Fat Dairy
- Soy (e.g. Tofu, Tempeh)
- Legumes/Nuts*

FRUITS + VEGETABLES 50%

- Fresh Fruit
- Raw Vegetables
- Cooked Vegetables

FATS

- Avocado
- Oils
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Cheese
- Butter

FRUITS + VEGETABLES 50%

LEAN PROTEIN 25%

GRAINS + CARBS 25%

HYDRATION

- Water
- Dairy/Non-Dairy Beverages
- Diluted Juice
- Flavored Beverages (Low/Zero Calorie)
- Coffee/Tea

FLAVORS

- Salt/Pepper
- Herbs
- Spices
- Vinegar
- Salsa
- Mustard
- Ketchup

THE ATHLETE'S PLATE HARD TRAINING DAY

Two-a-day high intensity practice/training or competition day.

GATORADE
THE SPORTS FUEL COMPANY

GRAINS + CARBS 50%

- Pasta
- Rice
- Potatoes
- Cereals
- Breads

LEAN PROTEIN 25%

- Poultry
- Beef/Game/Lamb
- Fish
- Eggs
- Low-Fat Dairy
- Soy (e.g. Tofu, Tempeh)
- Legumes/Nuts*

FRUITS + VEGETABLES 25%

- Fresh Fruit
- Canned Fruit
- Dried Fruit
- Raw Vegetables
- Cooked Vegetables

FATS

- Avocado
- Oils
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Cheese
- Butter



HYDRATION

- Water
- Dairy/Non-Dairy Beverages
- Diluted Juice
- Flavored Beverages (Low/Zero Calorie)
- Coffee/Tea

FLAVORS

- Salt/Pepper
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