

## **Diet and nutrition basics**

Diet and nutrition are the same words. You are on a diet whether you realize it or not. Your diet is simply what you put into your body. A diet can be aimed at losing weight, gaining weight, being healthy, athletic performance or simply feeding you. The most important aspect of a diet is identifying the needs of an athlete and selecting an appropriate diet for those purposes.

We as athletes need to be cautious consumers on all the foods that we consume; labels can be very misleading, and conventional wisdom can be even more misleading. We will break down food groups, sample meals, nutrient timing, pre and post workout nutrition, and all kinds of other diet questions in this packet.

## **Food groups and nutritional breakdowns**

**When to eat** - Our glucose tolerances and our sensitivity to insulin changes throughout the day based on our training and activity. The average person who is not training, has much less to worry about in this sense, however those that are in serious training what you eat, when you eat, is also important.

We should be eating 4-5 times a day. Two of those “meals” should be within an hour of training (an hour before and an hour afterward). These are two important times and the meals at these times should be our most regulated.

**What to eat** – Just as important as when we eat is what we are eating. The most important idea is that we try and start with as much basic food as possible. We want to prepare as much of our own food as possible. Things that are precooked and come in packages, boxes, bags, and plastics (think potato chips, crackers, breads, cookies, cereals, rice, grains) are generally not what we need for our diets. A simple rule to follow is eat things that come from the outside sections of a grocery store.

**Proteins** – We want to get our proteins in the lean sense – poultry, beef, pork, fish, shellfish, and eggs or egg-whites.

**Carbohydrates** – We want carbs at every meal – There is a good list below to pick from

**Dietary fats** – olive oil, flaxseed oil, coconut oil, omega 3 fish oil, are where we want to be here.

The groups listed above should be the majority of what we eat. The next groups are some that are not very conducive to the things we hope to achieve but will not hinder our diet greatly

**Dairies** – Cheese, milk, yogurts,

**Complex carbs** – pastas, breads, most grains, most cereal, potatoes – we should try and have these only within a short period of time after our workout. Use this group very sparingly

***Categories for dieters*** – Are you maintaining, gaining, or managing?

**Managing weight dieters** – Very mindful of what you are in taking – your meals should be 2-3 blocks at most (4-5 times a day, 12-15 blocks a day)

Example meal “3 block” – 3 oz. of beef, 1 banana. 1 ½ teaspoons of peanut butter

**Maintainers** – Still mindful but more relaxed – Your meals should be 3-4 blocks (4-5 times a day, 16-17 blocks day)

Example meal “4 block” – 4 oz. of tuna, 8 cups of celery, 4 tablespoons of avacdo

**Gainers** – Very mindful of what you are taking in – Your meals should be 4-5 (4-5 times a day, 18-20 blocks a day)

Example meal “5 block” – 5 eggs, 3 cups of salsa, 20 almonds

There are some basic steps that can help us utilize this information.

They are as follows

1. Eat often – Remember we want to eat 4-5 times a day. Not eating to lose weight, or eating one or two large meals hurts our metabolic processes
2. Protein – Every time we eat, we should eat protein!
3. “Good carbs” – Every time we eat, we include one of our carbs from the chart above – fruit, veggie, or nut/seed
4. Carbohydrate timing – If you are craving those carbohydrates that don’t fall in our good column (pastas, breads, cereals, etc.) we should have them during or after exercise. For the rest of the day try and keep to our “good” carbs.
5. Fats – include the good ones in your diet. Those listed above will help with healing, recovery, and body composition.
6. Water, water, water – Water is the most important and often the most neglected nutrient in your diet. We want to have at least 88 ounces a day! Soda, most juices, and sports drinks are not needed in a wrestling diet; they are high in sugar and calories that can cause negative insulin responses.

It’s important to note that these suggestions on nutrition are merely that; suggestions. These are not laws and we are not asking you to spend extra money or not eat what your parents want you to.