

# NUTRITION IDEAS FOR WRESTLERS

## ***THE "BEST" BEVERAGES***

**Every day our body loses about 10, 8-ounce cups of water** through normal body functions. These ten cups do not include what we lose through sweat during exercise! To maintain optimal performance, it is essential to replace the water that is lost.

The advantages and disadvantages of replacing fluids by drinking various beverages are listed below. The beverages are also ranked in order of preference, with **water being the beverage of choice**. With the exception of water, beverages consumed should contain nutrients (vitamins and minerals) the body needs for performance.

Beverages consumed within an hour prior to exercise, or during exercise, should not contain more than a small amount of sugar and should always be caffeine-free.

### WATER

The most essential nutrient for athletes.  
Is necessary to release energy from other nutrients.  
Should always be readily available.  
Sugar and fat free.

### SPORTS DRINKS - ***should contain no more than 70 calories per 8-ounce serving***

Designed for events lasting more than one hour in duration.  
Electrolytes from sports drinks may be needed during times of excessive fluid loss or during two-a-day practices.  
May cause more fluid to stay in the muscles during exercise.  
Most contain the optimal amount of sugar for use during exercise, no dilution necessary.  
Taste may cause people to drink more than they would with plain water.

### UNSWEETENED FRUIT JUICE

Apple, orange, and cranberry juices are highest in sugar and should be avoided within one hour of exercise.  
Provides many nutrients.  
Sugar content should be diluted if used within one hour prior to exercise, or during exercise.

### MILK

Good source of carbohydrates, calcium, and other nutrients.  
Great beverage for pre-competition meal, 3 - 4 hours prior to competition.  
Milk does not cause cotton mouth.

## POP

**Carbonation may cause stomach upset** in some athletes.

Contains no nutrients.

Even diet, caffeine-free pop has many added substances that need to be digested which may slow the rate of fluid absorption by the body.

May contain caffeine which increases urine loss & risk of dehydration.

Regular pop contains high amounts of sugar.

**NOTE: An athlete should drink at least 10, eight ounce cups of these beverages each day!**

*Sources:* Berning, Jackie, Sports Nutritionist. Castle Rock, Colorado; Clark, Nancy, M.S., R.D. The Athlete's Kitchen, New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1986; Coleman, Ellen, R.D., M.A., M.P.H. Program Director: Riverside Cardiac Fitness Center, Riverside, California; Coleman, Ellen. "Sports Drink Update," Sports Science Exchange, Volume 1, Number 5, 1988; Food Power, National Dairy Council, Inc., 1991; Journal of The American Dietetic Association, Volume 86, Number 8, August, 1986; Nutrition Education Instructional Materials, Michigan Weight Monitoring Program, 1996; Shockey, Gayle, L., M.P.H., R.D. "Hydration and Health: Meeting Athletes' Fluids Needs," Sportscare and Fitness, July/August, 1988; "Sports Drinks: Adjusting for the Flavor Factor," The First Aider, Summer, 1991; Tribble, Evelyn. "An Update on Sports Drinks," American Coach, July/August, 1988.

*Special thanks to Molly Pelzer, RD, LD from Dairy Council for providing ideas and reviewing this material.*

11/97

# NUTRITION IDEAS FOR WRESTLERS

## FAST FOODS

Eating a healthy, balanced meal at a fast food restaurant can be a challenge for anyone. Wrestlers may think it is impossible for them to eat fast food without gaining weight. In reality, **there are choices at fast food restaurants that can fit into a wrestler's diet plan.** While fast food should not be the mainstay of anyone's diet, by following the ideas given below it is possible for wrestlers to occasionally eat fast food.

### Here are a few ideas to help ensure a lower fat content in fast foods.

Avoid mayonnaise and special sauces on sandwiches.

Avoid fried items such as fish, chicken, chicken nuggets, French toast sticks, and french fries.

Choose Swiss cheese as it is lower in fat than American.

Don't add gravies to foods.

Don't order foods with extra cheese or bacon added.

Drink low-fat milk.

If you have no choice but to order fried foods, remove the skin as it contains large amounts of fat.

Order salads with low-fat dressing.

Some food preparation methods can also help keep the calorie content from getting too high. Low fat cooking methods include steaming, roasting, poaching, broiling, baking, and cooked in its own juice.

The following is a comparison of high fat and low fat meal choices.

### BREAKFAST

#### **Low fat choices**

Bagels  
English muffin with jam or honey  
Hot or cold cereal  
Muffins  
Orange juice  
Pancakes with syrup, but little butter  
Low-fat milk  
Toast with jam

#### **High fat choices**

Bacon  
Hash rounds  
Sausage & egg sandwiches

## LUNCH & DINNER

### **Low fat choices**

Baked entrees  
Broiled meat  
Low-fat bean burrito  
Chef or side salads with low fat dressing  
Grilled lean hamburgers w/o special sauce  
Grilled chicken w/o mayonnaise  
Lean meat sandwiches  
Low-fat milk  
Low-fat yogurt cones  
Pizza with thin or hand tossed crust  
(Avoid pepperoni, sausage, extra cheese)

### **High fat choices**

Any deluxe sandwiches  
Chicken nuggets  
Crispy shell Mexican dishes  
French fries  
Fried chicken  
Hot dogs with cheese/chili  
Nachos Supreme  
Sandwiches with cheese  
Whole milk

In summary, while everyone should be careful when eating at fast food restaurants to avoid foods high in fat content, wrestlers must be very careful. There are healthy choices to be made at fast food restaurants and being prepared ahead of time will help in making good choices.

*Sources:* Eating on the Run, 2nd edition, Tribolo, E., 1992; Eating on the Road, U.S. Olympic Committee Sports Medicine Division and the International Center for Sports Medicine, 1993; Fast Foods, U.S. Olympic Committee Sports Medicine Division and the International Center for Sports Medicine, 1993; Nutrition Education Instructional Materials, Michigan Weight Monitoring Program, 1996; "Wise Food Choices for Athletes on the Road," Gatorade Sports Science Exchange #1, Berning, Jackie, 1988.

*Special thanks to Molly Pelzer, RD, LD from Dairy Council for providing ideas and reviewing this material.*

11/97

# NUTRITION IDEAS FOR WRESTLERS

## ***A LITTLE SODIUM GOES A LONG WAY!***

Sodium is a mineral essential for good health and athletic performance. For optimum muscle functioning during exercise, one's body must have the proper balance of sodium and water. **However, too much sodium can lead to fluid retention because extra sodium requires additional water for dilution. Fluid retention results in weight gain and impaired athletic performance.**

Excessive amounts of sodium in the body can be caused by consuming too much sodium in one's diet or through fluid loss, especially by sweating. If this lost fluid is not replaced, it increases the sodium concentration in one's body. This triggers the thirst response which is why one usually drinks more water during exercise. If the body is deprived of water it becomes dehydrated. **In a dehydrated state the muscles cannot contract properly and are fatigued more easily.**

According to the National Research Council, 1100 to 3300 milligrams of sodium per day is adequate. Most Americans consume 2-6 times that amount! Sodium is most commonly found in table salt. A teaspoon of salt contains approximately 2300 milligrams of sodium.

*Follow these hints to reduce sodium in your diet:*

1. **Avoid the salt shaker!** Salty food is an acquired taste. After 2-3 months without the salt shaker, it won't be missed.
2. **Eat foods whose label's state "unsalted," "no salt added," "without added salt," or "low sodium" often.** Be careful of foods stating they have "reduced sodium" because they may have started with extremely high amounts of sodium.
3. **Eat pickles, ketchup, mustard, and special sauces sparingly** as they often contain high amounts of sodium.
4. **Eat processed foods like ham, bacon, and sausage sparingly.**
5. **Eat sparingly of foods listing salt or sodium as one of the first items on the label.**

*Here is a list of the sodium content in ten common foods:*

<u>Food</u>	<u>Milligrams of sodium</u>
Dill pickle, whole	928 mg
Tomato juice, 6 ounces	658 mg
Low fat cottage cheese, ½ cup	459 mg
Italian dressing, 2 Tbsp.	300 mg
Corn Flakes, 1 cup	281 mg
Potato chips, 1 ounce	216 mg
Instant pudding, ½ cup	161 mg
White bread, 1 slice	129 mg
Skim milk, 8 ounces	126 mg
Cocktail peanuts, 1 ounce	118 mg

Sources: Boise State University Wellness Web Site, <[www.boisestate.edu/wellness/bsu\\_wellness\\_info/sodium.htm](http://www.boisestate.edu/wellness/bsu_wellness_info/sodium.htm)>; Johns Hopkins University Nutrition Web Site, <[www.med.jhu.edu/nutrition/sodium.htm](http://www.med.jhu.edu/nutrition/sodium.htm)>

11/99