

NUTRITION IDEAS FOR WRESTLERS

EATING HEALTHY EVERY DAY

Due to concerns about weight control, some wrestlers choose to skip meals or excessively restrict their daily food intake. Those practices can be detrimental to their health, as well as academic and athletic performance. **In order to maintain the high energy levels needed for their intense workouts, wrestlers need to eat a healthy, balanced diet on a daily basis.** If wrestlers make food choices that are high in carbohydrate, low in fat, with moderate amounts of protein, they will be able to eat a healthy, balanced diet without the need to be overly concerned about weight.

Carbohydrates can be in the form of "complex" carbohydrates or "simple" carbohydrates. **Complex carbohydrates are found in breads, grains, and cereals. Simple carbohydrates come from foods containing refined sugar such as pop and candy, and from foods containing natural sugars such as fruit. Getting sugar from natural sources, such as fruit, is preferable to candy and pop because it will satisfy one's sweet tooth while providing the body with nutrients and fluid at the same time.** Energy from carbohydrates is converted into glucose. Glucose provides immediate, short-term energy. Unused glucose is converted into glycogen and stored in the muscles or liver, or converted to fat and stored as fat tissue. A variety of high carbohydrate foods must be eaten every day to ensure one is getting a variety nutrients necessary for peak performance.

Wrestlers should understand **it is impossible and undesirable to eliminate all fat from one's diet.** While excessive fat is unneeded and contributes greatly to weight gain or the difficulty in losing weight, **fat is needed for many of the body's processes which are essential to athletes.** Fat content in foods can occur because of naturally occurring fat or fat that is added. By eliminating excess fat, but not eliminating all foods containing fat, a wrestler can maintain or lose weight while still being healthy.

The following practical ideas for high carbohydrate, low-fat, moderate protein foods are provided to assist wrestlers, their parents and coaches in choosing appropriate foods.

BREAKFAST IDEAS

Drink at least one 6-ounce glass of your favorite juice

Drink at least one 8-ounce glass of water

Bagel, English muffin, or whole-wheat toast spread with peanut butter and topped with a sliced banana, or jam

Bowl of cold or hot cereal with low-fat milk, topped with fresh fruit

English muffin, or whole-wheat toast spread with jam

French toast, pancakes, or waffles topped with low-fat yogurt, applesauce, syrup, or jam

Fresh or canned fruit
Homemade milkshakes made with low-fat milk, low-fat yogurt, and fruit
Leftover vegetable pizza
Poached egg
Stir cold breakfast cereal into low-fat yogurt

LUNCH IDEAS

Drink at least one 8-ounce glass of water

Drink at least one 8-ounce glass of low-fat milk

Whole-wheat or pita bread with turkey, chicken, lean roast beef, or lean ham, and Swiss cheese, and vegetables. (Tomatoes, green peppers, lettuce, cucumbers, onions, and sprouts are all great!)

Tuna or chicken salad sandwich with low-fat mayonnaise.

Baked potato topped with low-fat sour cream, mozzarella cheese, salsa, or skim milk

Vegetable pizza

English muffin topped with pizza sauce and melted cheese

Chicken noodle soup

Fresh fruit

Graham crackers

Vanilla wafer

Pudding made with low-fat milk

Low-fat yogurt

Always include at least one serving of vegetables and fruit with lunch

DINNER IDEAS

Drink at least one, 8-ounce glass of water

Drink at least one, 8-ounce glass of low-fat milk

Baked potato with low-fat topping

Baked turkey, white meat without skin

Bread, muffins, or rolls

Broiled chicken, white meat without skin

Brown or white rice

Cooked vegetables

Fruit

Instant pudding made with low-fat milk

Lean beef or pork

Oriental stir fries with rice

Pasta with tomato sauce or low-fat meat sauce

Tortillas with low-fat refried beans and salsa

Tuna-noodle casserole made with water packed tuna

SNACK IDEAS

Drink at least 1 8-ounce glass of water with your snack.

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| Air popped popcorn | Low-fat yogurt |
| Animal crackers | Low-fat pudding cups |
| Bagels | Low-fat fruit bars |
| Baked snack crackers and cheese | Oatmeal cookies |
| Blueberry muffins | Peanut butter and jelly sandwich |
| Chicken or turkey sandwich with low-fat mayonnaise | Pretzels |
| Fresh fruit | Pudding pops |
| Fruit Newtons | String cheese |
| Fruit bread | Vanilla wafers |
| Fruit bars | Vegetables and dip |
| Ice milk or frozen yogurt | |

HELPFUL FOOD & CALORIE SUGGESTIONS

Meats: The following meats are low in fat and have approximately **120-150 calories, per 3 ounce serving.**

Fish
Lean roast beef
Lean ham
Lean ground beef - (Rinse ground beef to reduce the fat content)
Skinless, white chicken
Skinless, white turkey
Water-packed tuna
When cooking meat, it should be broiled, baked, or grilled to keep the fat content to a minimum. Choosing leaner cuts of meat will help in keeping the fat content low.

Breads: The following breads have approximately **50-100 calories per serving.**

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| 1 biscuit | 5 saltine cracker squares |
| 1 slice bread | 1-6" corn tortilla |
| ½ English muffin | 1-4" pancake |
| ½ hamburger or hot dog bun | 1-4" waffle |
| 1 dinner roll | |

Adding butter, mayonnaise, or margarine greatly increases the calorie content.
Honey, jam, or low-fat peanut butter are a better choice.

Calorie content of various spreads:

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|---|--|
| Butter (hard) - 34 calories per teaspoon | Margarine - 34 calories per teaspoon |
| Butter (whipped) - 27 calories per teaspoon | Mayonnaise - 33 calories per teaspoon |
| Catsup - 10 calories per teaspoon | Mustard - 4 calories per teaspoon |
| Honey - 21 calories per teaspoon | Peanut butter - 31 calories per teaspoon |
| Jelly/jam - 17 calories per teaspoon | |

Fruits and vegetables vary greatly in calories, but they are all **low in calories compared to most other foods**. They are also fat free, with the exception of avocados, unless they are topped with margarine, butter, or high calorie dressings. They are very high in nutrients.

HEALTHY CHOICES WHEN EATING OUT:

Baked potato with low-fat toppings
Bean or chicken burrito
Cheese or vegetable pizza
Chicken sandwich, with low-fat mayonnaise, barbecue sauce, or honey mustard
Chili
Roast beef sandwich
Side salad with low-fat dressing
Skim Milk
(Refer to the fast food handout for additional ideas.)

BEST FOOD CHOICES FROM CONVENIENCE STORES:

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| Animal crackers | Low-fat chocolate milk |
| Fruit | Low-fat bean burrito |
| Fruit bars (ie. Fig bars) | Nutri Grain bars |
| Granola bar (not chocolate covered) | Pretzels |
| Juice boxes | String cheese |
| Low-fat yogurt | V-8 juice |

Sources: Berning, Jackie & Coleman, Ellen, Professional Presentations, various dates; Diet, Exercise, & Fitness, Coleman, Ellen, MA, MPH, RD, 1990; Food Power, National Dairy Council, 1991; Health and Safety Considerations for Interscholastic Wrestling, Ohio High School Athletic Association & Ohio Wrestling Coaches Association, 1994; Nutrition Education Instructional Materials, Michigan Weight Monitoring Program, 1996; Nutrition and Sport Success, United States Olympic Committee & Swanson Center for Nutrition, Inc., 1990; Pinning Down Your Optimal Weight: A wrestler's Guide to Good Nutrition, Ricci, Marilyn, MS, RD, 1991; The Wrestler's Diet: A Guide to Healthy Weight Control, Landry, Roger, Oppliger, Robert, Shelter, Ann, & Landry, Greg, 1991.

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LOW-FAT MENU IDEAS FOR WRESTLERS (Serving sizes indicate one serving from that food group)

| | Milk | | Meat | | Vegetable | | Fruit | | Grain | |
|------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|--|---------------------|--|--------------------|--|---|--|
| Breakfast | Choose 1 | | Choose 0-1 | | Choose 0-1 | | Choose 1 | | Choose 2-4 | |
| | 8 oz. low-fat milk | | 4 oz. peanut butter | | 6 oz. tomato juice | | 6 oz. fruit juice | | 1 bowl cold cereal | |
| | 1 slice Swiss/Amer. cheese | | Poached egg | | 6 oz. V-8 juice | | 1 cup raw fruit | | ½ Bagel | |
| | 8 oz. Low-fat choc. milk | | | | | | 1 piece fruit | | ½ English muffin | |
| | Leftover cheese pizza | | | | | | ½ cup canned fruit | | 4" Pancake | |
| | 8 oz. low-fat milkshake | | | | | | | | 4" Waffle | |
| | 8 oz. low-fat yogurt | | | | | | | | 1 slice whole wheat toast | |
| | 8 oz. blended milk/fruit beverage (equals 1 milk + 1 fruit) | | | | | | | | 1 slice cheese pizza | |
| | 1 oz. Swiss, cheddar, Monterey Jack, Colby cheese | | | | | | | | ½ cup hot cereal | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lunch | Choose 1 | | Choose 1 | | Choose 1-2 | | Choose 1 | | Choose 2-4 | |
| | 8 oz. low-fat yogurt | | 3 oz. water packed tuna | | ½ cup canned veg. | | 6 oz. fruit juice | | 1 slice bread | |
| | 8 oz. low-fat milk | | 3 oz. roast pork | | 1 cup raw veggies | | 1 piece fruit | | pita bread | |
| | 1 slice Swiss/Amer. cheese | | 3 oz. Lean roast beef | | 1 med. baked potato | | 1 cup raw fruit | | ½ hot dog or hamburger bun | |
| | 8 oz. low-fat choc. milk | | 3 oz. lean ham | | ½ cup mashed potato | | ½ cup canned fruit | | 1 dinner roll | |
| | ½ cup ice milk | | 3 oz. chicken or turkey (skinless) | | 6 baby carrots | | | | 5 saltine crackers | |
| | 1 oz. Swiss, cheddar, Monterey Jack, Colby cheese | | 3 oz. broiled/baked fish | | Spaghetti sauce | | | | 1 - 6" flour tortilla | |
| | | | | | | | | | ½ cup pasta | |
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| Snack | Choose 1 | | Choose 1 | | Choose 1 | | Choose 0-1 | | Choose 2-4 | |
| | Yogurt | | 4 oz. peanut butter | | 6 oz. tomato juice | | 6 oz. fruit juice | | ½ English muffin | |
| | 8 oz. low-fat milk | | 3 oz. lean ham | | 6 oz. V-8 juice | | 1 piece fruit | | ½ bagel | |
| | 1 slice Swiss/Amer. Cheese | | 3 oz. chicken or turkey (skinless) | | 6 baby carrots | | 1 cup raw fruit | | 1 slice whole wheat toast | |
| | 8 oz. low-fat choc. milk | | 3 oz. water packed tuna | | 1 baked potato | | ½ cup canned fruit | | 5 saltine crackers | |
| | ½ cup ice milk | | | | | | | | 1 - 6" tortilla | |
| | 1 oz. Swiss, cheddar, Monterey Jack, Colby cheese | | | | | | | | 1 bowl cold cereal | |
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| Supper | Choose 1 | | Choose 1 | | Choose 1-2 | | Choose 0-1 | | Choose 2-4 | |
| | 8 oz. low-fat yogurt | | 3 oz. water packed tuna | | ½ cup canned veg. | | 6 oz. fruit juice | | 1 slice bread/pita bread | |
| | 8 oz. low-fat milk | | | | 1 cup raw veggies | | 1 piece fruit | | 1 - 6" flour tortilla | |
| | 1 slice Swiss/Amer. cheese | | 3 oz. Lean roast beef | | 1 med. baked potato | | 1 cup raw fruit | | ½ hot dog/hamburger bun | |
| | 8 oz. low-fat choc. milk | | 3 oz. lean ham | | ½ cup mashed potato | | ½ cup canned fruit | | 5 saltine crackers | |
| | ½ cup ice milk | | 3 oz. chicken or turkey (skinless) | | 6 baby carrots | | | | 1 dinner roll | |
| | 1 oz. Swiss, cheddar, Monterey Jack, Colby cheese | | 3 oz. broiled/baked fish | | Spaghetti sauce | | | | 3 slices veggie pizza (equals 1 milk, 1 veggie, 3 grains) | |
| | | | | | | | | | ½ cup pasta | |
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TOTAL SERVINGS 4

3+

3-6

2-4

8-16

NOTE: To maintain hydration drink at least one, 8-ounce glass of water with each meal and snack.