

# General Nutritional Information for Age, Youth and Performance Level Swimmers

## Why bother with nutrition?

A balanced, varied diet will help you to achieve their swimming potential

## How??

All swimmers need to ensure that they:

- ✓ Have the correct amount of energy for growth and development
- ✓ Have the right foods to build and maintain strong bones
- ✓ Need to be fit and healthy and not ill as much of the time as possible
- ✓ Need to recover as quickly as possible
- ✓ Have the ability to get to and maintain an appropriate weight
- ✓ Be able to concentrate on training and school/work

## In other words food and fluids will affect swimmers on a daily basis and shouldn't be left to chance

- E** Energy – get yours from carbohydrates
- A** Attitude – a positive attitude towards food choice is essential
- T** Tasty – taste is important, always try to make food tasty
  
- W** water is essential for life and for swimming
- E** enjoy your food it puts you in a good mood when you enjoy it
- L** little and often is the best way too stay energised
- L** lots of fruits and vegetables benefits your immune system
  
- S** spend some time planning and organising your snacks and drinks
- W** worrying about food at competitions should be a thing of the past
- I** Invest in good quality food not cheap convenient food
- M** make breakfast an essential part of your preparations
  
- W** water bottles need cleaning regularly
- E** Energise to survive the rigours of long hours training
- L** learn to rustle up some quick, tasty meals on your own
- L** lastly enjoy the occasional treat – you deserve it



## Age Group Swimmers

### Training Diet

Your main challenges are:

✓ **To have variety in your diet (base meal choices around the Balance of Good Health)**

✓ **To eat suitable snacks around training sessions**

✓ **To keep as hydrated as possible**

Water, weak squash/cordial or an isotonic sports drink

Make sure you like the flavour and remember to keep on topping up

✓ **Set simple nutrition and hydration goals and to self monitor**

These could include:

- Eating a good breakfast every day
- Counting up how many portions from each food group you have eaten
- Monitoring your “pee” If you are hydrated it should be pale in colour and lots of it. If it is bright yellow and a small amount you are probably dehydrated and need to drink more
- Planning your snacks and always having the right ones in your bag



Plate model curtesy of BNF

### Suitable snacks

- |                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| Bananas          | Raisins       |
| Milkshakes       | Sultanas      |
| Yoghurts         | Teacake       |
| Chicken sandwich | Currant Bun   |
| Ham roll         | Scone and jam |



Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables per day (best combination is 3 vegetables and 2 fruit)

Eat 2-3 portions of meat or alternatives daily

Have a low saturated fat intake but include essential fats ... Like the oils in fish

Base meals around starchy, wholegrain (preferably) carbohydrates

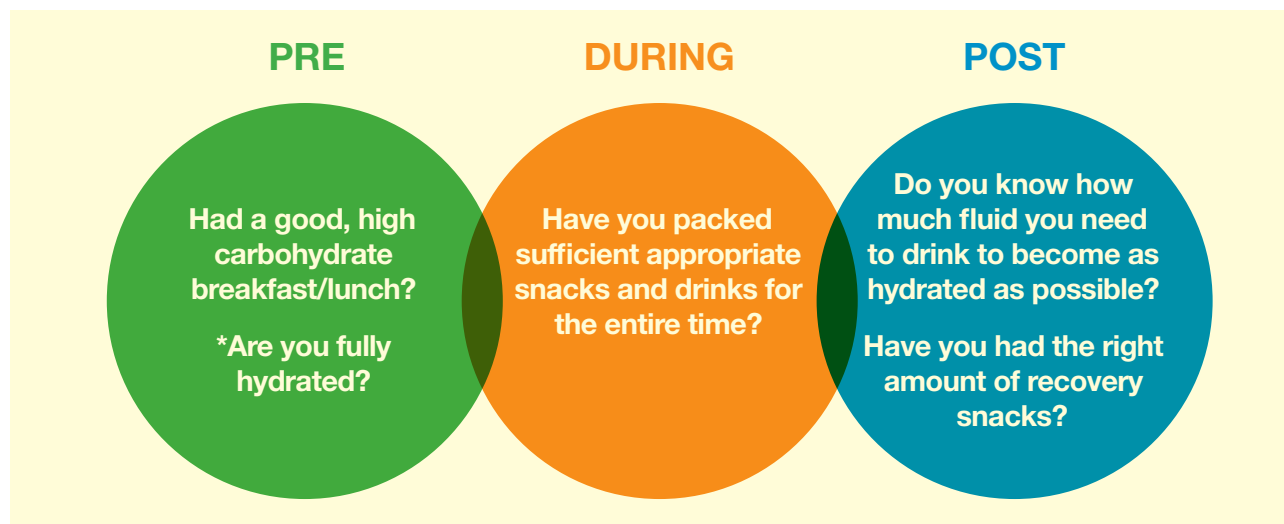
Eat 2-3 portions of milk and dairy products daily

## Youth Group Swimmers

### Your main challenges are:

Taking responsibility for your own

- ✓ **pre, during and post competition eating and drinking strategy**



- ✓ **Nutrition and hydration plan for travelling**

### A few snacks that travel well

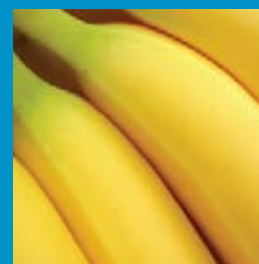
**Dried fruit** – sultanas/currants/raisins/apricots/dates/prunes/ cranberries/bananas

**Juices** – cartons of orange/apple/pineapple

**Plain biscuits** – Ginger nuts/fig rolls/jaffa cakes

**Bakery goods** – Scotch pancakes/sultana and lemon pancakes/ malt loaf (sliced)/ cinnamon and raisin bagels/ fruit cake/ teacakes/hot cross buns

**Bars** – Nutrigrain bars/Kellogg's elevenses or special K bars/ Krispie squares



- ✓ **Acclimatization strategies when competing in extremes of temperatures, humidity and altitude**

In hot and humid indoor conditions dehydration can occur quickly. Fluid intake should be matched with fluid lost during competition. If properly hydrated prior to event no more than 200-500mls per hour should be sufficient to prevent dehydration



- ✓ **Eating high but non nutritious carbohydrates appropriately**

There are occasions when sugary snacks can be consumed. These times are when you need to refuel your glycogen (energy) stores as quickly as possible such as immediately after training or competition. Such snacks should be limited to these times if possible and should not replace more nutritious carbohydrate foods.



## Performance Group Swimmers

Your main challenges are:

- ✓ **To be able to manipulate the diet for different periods of training and competition**

During periods of rest and rehabilitation from injury cut down on portion size of meals and cut out sugary snacks but maintain a balance, varied diet to avoid weight gain



- ✓ **Be able to choose suitable meals and snacks whilst abroad using local food**

Local food can often provide a swimmer with the right nutrients needed. Choose local fruits, vegetables, breads, rice, potatoes, pasta or other grains to provide the carbohydrate energy. Choose grilled, roasted meat, poached, baked or grilled fish.

Avoid deep fried dishes, however tempting and do not try anything you do not recognise near to a competition.



- ✓ **Maintain an appropriate body composition throughout the year depending on training**



**ENERGY IN  
MUST EQUAL  
ENERGY OUT!**



- ✓ **Be knowledgeable about the use and potential risks and benefits of dietary supplements**

There are many dietary supplements on the market and some can be useful in helping to increase carbohydrate energy in the form of sports drinks, bars and gels. Be aware of the potential risk of contamination with substances which can produce a positive drugs test – it is very difficult to tell!