

Whether you are a competitive athlete or a weekend warrior, your fueling regimen can either boost or hinder your performance. It is important to understand when your nutrition needs change as an active individual. Your energy and nutrient needs not only vary between in-season and offseason but can also change from day to day based on intensity level of training. The composition of your plate may change between seasons and training days.

PRESEASON AND IN-SEASON, HARD TRAINING DAYS

- Calorie and carbohydrate requirements are high
- Additional fluids and electrolytes are needed for hydration
- Protein is required for muscle recovery
- Antioxidant rich foods are important for immune system support

Performance Plate Breakdown

(PLATE: ½ plate whole grains and other energy dense foods, ¼ plate fruit/veg, ¼ plate lean protein, moderate healthy fats and condiments, adequate fluids for hydration)

Sample Breakfast

- Bowl of oatmeal
- Slice of whole grain toast with peanut butter
- Turkey sausage links
- Scrambled eggs with spinach and avocado slices
- Mixed berry fruit bowl
- Water

Sample Lunch

- Whole-wheat tortilla wrap with grilled chicken strips (in tortilla)
- Spinach, cucumber, tomato (in tortilla)
- Avocado and hummus (in tortilla)
- Fresh fruit salad
- Baked sweet potato
- Water and/or electrolyte sports drink

Sample Dinner

- Whole-grain spaghetti
- Meatballs with either lean ground beef or ground turkey
- Tomato sauce with mushrooms, onions, and spinach
- Dinner roll
- Side salad with olive oil dressing
- Water and/or low-fat milk

OFFSEASON, LIGHTER TRAINING DAYS

- Calorie and carbohydrate needs are reduced due to decreased training
- Maintain adequate fluid and electrolyte intake
- Non-starchy vegetable portions are increased for weight management
- Adequate protein is emphasized for muscle growth and repair

Performance Plate Breakdown

(PLATE: ½ plate fruit/veg, ¼ plate whole grains, ¼ plate lean protein, limited amounts of healthy fats and condiments, adequate fluids for hydration)

Whole grains may decrease, and lean proteins may increase, for offseason weight loss.

Sample Breakfast

- One or two slices of whole grain toast
- Low-fat yogurt with fruit & nut topping
- Veggie omelet
- Water

Sample Lunch

- Vegetable salad: mixed greens, tomatoes, cucumbers, bell peppers, mushrooms, olives, avocado
- Olive oil salad dressing
- Homemade chicken noodle soup
- Whole-wheat crackers
- Water

Sample Dinner

- Baked potato with a sprinkle of cheese
- Baked salmon
- Steamed broccoli & cauliflower
- Side salad
- Olive oil salad dressing
- Water

