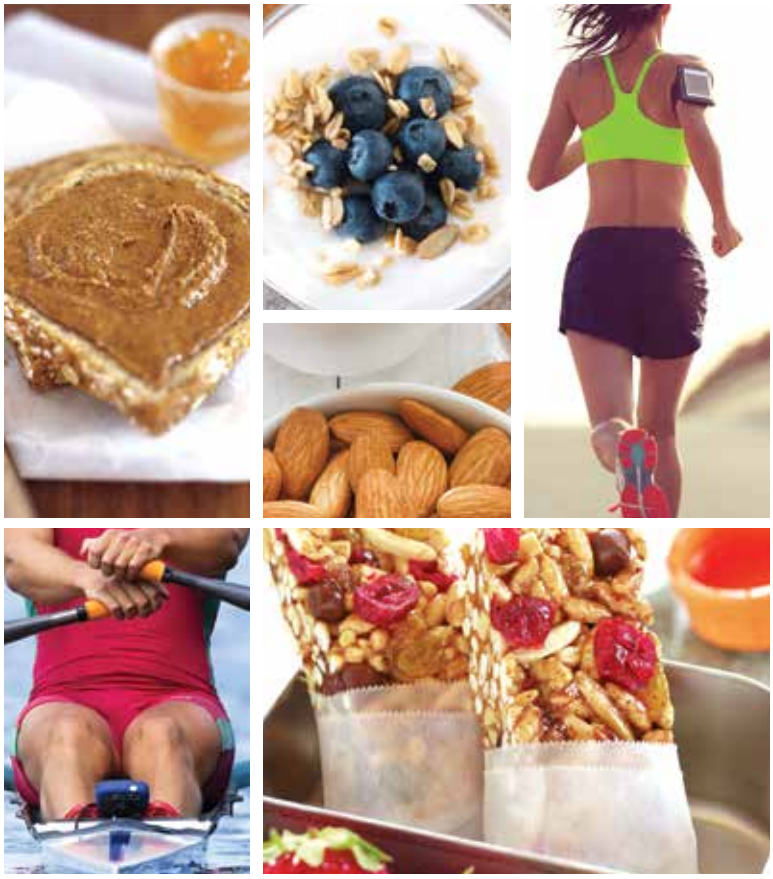
FUEL UP FOR FITNESS

Whether you're a weekend warrior or a competitive athlete, a nutrient-rich diet is essential to help fuel your body during workouts and aid in post-exercise recovery.



CHOOSING A PRE-WORKOUT SNACK

A good rule of thumb is to focus your snack on carbs. Eating carbs an hour or more prior to working out can help boost energy availability and may help speed post-exercise recovery. Focus on foods low in fat and fiber to optimize digestion. You know your body best, so adjust your food choices depending on your food preferences, exercise duration and intensity. And don't forget to hydrate: drink plenty of fluids prior to working out. Aim for two cups of fluid two hours before exercise, and stay hydrated by drinking at least 4 ounces of fluid every 15 minutes during intense exercise. Weather, how much you sweat, your pre-hydration status and body size are some of the factors that can affect hydration needs.

FUEL UP WITH THESE PRE-WORKOUT SNACK IDEAS:

- Almond butter + honey + banana slices on toast
- Handful of almonds + grapes
- Fruit yogurt topped with almonds

CHOOSING A POST-WORKOUT SNACK

Post-workout, your goal is three-fold:

1. **Replace carbs** used by your muscles during workout
2. **Restore fluids** and electrolytes lost through sweat
3. **Eat protein** to help repair damaged muscle tissue and increase muscle protein synthesis

Plan ahead and keep recovery foods and beverages in your gym bag for easy accessibility post-workout—like a stash of almonds, one of the most portable and convenient snacks around. Try to refuel 15 to 20 minutes after your workout for optimal muscle repair and recovery. And, again, don't forget to hydrate!

Fuel recovery with these post-workout snacks:

- Smoothie made with almond milk + frozen fruit + spinach + nonfat Greek yogurt
- Trail mix with almonds and dried fruit + turkey jerky
- Low-fat cottage cheese + chopped almonds + sliced fruit topping

MAGNIFICENT MAGNESIUM

You may not think much about magnesium when you think about your diet, but it's an important mineral for everyone, expecially athletes. That's because **magnesium is involved in nearly every process that affects muscle function, including energy production, oxygen uptake and electrolyte balance**.

Athletes lose magnesium in sweat and urine. Even marginal magnesium deficiency can impair exercise performance and amplify the negative effects associated with strenuous exercise[1] Low magnesium can also result in increased risk of muscle cramping. Unfortunately, most athletes fall short in getting the magnesium they need each day[2]

For general good health, men need 400 to 420 mg per day of magnesium and women need 310 to 320 mg per day. But research shows that athlete needs may be greater: compared to a sedentary person of the same gender and age, athletes competing in strenuous exercise may require 10% to 20% additional magnesium[1]

Almonds are one of the top food sources of magnesium in the diet, providing 20% of your daily needs (76 mg) in every healthy one-ounce handful.

PRE-WORKOUT

MASON JAR BLUEBERRY PARFAIT

Makes 4 servings

- 3/4 cup uncooked oats
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds
- 1/3 cup sliced almonds
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk
- 1/4 cup of blueberries

Divide and layer oats, chia seeds, sliced almonds, almond milk and blueberries into four small jars. Repeat each layer until the jars are full. Then place in refrigerator and leave overnight.

Nutrition info per serving: Calories 131; Protein 5 g; Carbohydrates 15 g; Total Sugars 1.5 g; Added Sugars 0 g; Fiber 4 g; Fat 7 g; Saturated Fat 0.5 g; Cholesterol 0 mg; Sodium 47 mg; Potassium 163 mg; iron 1 mg; Calcium 160 mg; Magnesium 41 mg; Vitamin E 4 mg

76 mg of magnesium, to help support healthy muscle and nerve function, blood sugar levels and blood pressure

6 g of plant protein, to help build and preserve muscle and bone, and help keep you feeling satisfied

7.73 mg of vitamin E, the highest amount in all tree nuts, to help protect cells from damage

210 mg of potassium, important for muscle contraction

75 mg of calcium, to help build and maintain strong bones

0.3 mg of riboflavin, a B vitamin that helps convert food into fuel

135 mg phosphorus, which helps build and maintain strong bones and plays a role in how the body uses and stores energy

1 mg of iron, which carries oxygen to all body cells

1. Nielsen FH, Lukaski HC. Update on the relationship between magnesium and exercise. Magnesium Research. 2006;19(3):180-189.
2. Volpe SL. Magnesium and the athlete. Current Sports Medicine Reports. 2015;1404: 279-283.

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