

HOW MUCH WATER SHOULD YOU DRINK TO HYDRATE FOR A SOCCER MATCH?

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Staying hydrated is crucial during soccer matches, especially those played at hot, humid summer tournaments. Players at the pro level know the importance of this facet of preparation. Visiting European top-level players come to the sidelines during rare breaks in play to hit the sports drinks during summer visits for exhibition matches in the sweltering United States and steamy parts of Asia. Your goal as well needs to be to drink enough but not too much.

CONSIDERATIONS

A measurement called your "sweat rate" can help you determine how much to drink during a soccer match. Weigh yourself without clothes before and within 10 minutes after completing a soccer match. Track how much you drink and convert the amount in ounces to pounds; 16 oz. of water equals 1 lb. If, for example, you drink nothing and lose 2 lbs. in an hour, that is your hourly sweat rate. Try to drink 8 oz. every 15 minutes to better keep up with your fluid needs.

BEFORE PLAYING

For amateur soccer or youth matches, normal drinking to address thirst ought to suffice. Serious soccer players at an intense practice or full 90-minute game need to plan more carefully to avoid dehydration. During training, drink either water or a sports drink every 15 to 20 minutes, recommend soccer journalist Gloria Averbuch and registered dietitian Nancy Clark in "Food Guide for Soccer." Aim for 4 to 8 oz., which is four to eight gulps, at each water break.

WHILE PLAYING

Place one or two bottles of sports drinks and a bottle of water on the sideline for long practices or matches. During breaks in the action, including half time, drink a balanced amount of water. Try to "tank up" if you are in a match and the next chance for a drink is uncertain, without drinking so much that water sloshes in your stomach or you feel the need to urinate, "Food Guide for Soccer" advises.

AFTER PLAYING

If you are a recreational player, and you've followed adequate hydration, you shouldn't be dehydrated after the match, Averbuch and Clark note. Replace your sweat losses with water. Sports drinks are designed to be consumed during exercise rather than after, they note. If you are exhausted and need to add

carbohydrates and protein as well as fluids, have chocolate milk, a fruit smoothie or instant breakfast after the match. These can be especially valuable if you are at a tournament and have additional matches coming up in an hour or two.

References

- 1 "Food Guide for Soccer: Tips & Recipes from the Pros"; Gloria Averbuch, et al.; 2010
- 2 [FIFA: F-MARC Nutrition for Football; September 2005 \(PDF\)](#)

HEALTHY SNACKS BEFORE SOCCER

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If you've heard your whole life that snacking is bad, playing soccer can turn that notion on its head. "Snacking can be the healthiest thing you do," says registered dietitian Debra Wein in a special edition on soccer for "NSCA's Performance Training Journal." Snacks can fill nutrient gaps in your diet if you focus on food involving yogurt or low-fat pudding, especially if you rarely eat dairy. Even more important, healthy snacks for soccer prime you to have the fuel you need to finish strong in each half of the game.

SUGGESTIONS

Anyone who has ever watched a youth soccer game has seen the ubiquitous orange segments passed out at halftime -- also recommended for before the game. The authors of "Food Guide for Soccer," sports dietitian Nancy Clark and soccer journalist Gloria Averbuch, suggest fresh or canned fruits and juices before the game. They also agree with Wein on the value of flavored yogurt. "Food Guide for Soccer" also lists crackers, fig bars, pretzels, leftover pasta or energy bars as possible healthy snacks before soccer, as well as simple biscuit-type cookies or animal crackers. The nutrition council that advises FIFA, the international governing body of soccer, further agrees with its suggestions of 8 oz. of flavored yogurt or 8 oz. of fruit juice before a game.

TIMING

A snack is part of the steady fueling that has your muscles primed to train or play for 90 minutes or more. Allow three to four hours for a large meal to digest, one to two hours for a blended or liquid meal and less than an hour for a small snack. Test how large a snack you can tolerate and how long you need to consume it before the game starts. You may only be able to have a small pretzel or graham crackers, according to "Food Guide for Soccer."

IMPORTANCE

Well-timed snacks can play a deceptively important role. Averbuch and Clark cite evidence that most goals are scored in the last five minutes of the first and second half of a game, with World Cup goals often coming between the 76th and 90th minute of a match. Even at the youth soccer level, you don't want to give up a crucial goal because you ran out of gas.

WARNING

Sports scientist Donald T. Kirkendall of the University of North Carolina notes the prevalence of junk snacks at games and tournaments around the country. "Everyone who has ever been to a soccer field on a weekend has seen this," he says in a column for the online site of US Youth Soccer. Soda, sweet drinks, potato chips, fries and candy bars are typically on sale at tournament sites. Instead, he recommends carbohydrate-replenishment drinks, pretzels or raisins for post-match recovery combined with refueling before the next game in a tournament.

REFERENCES

- ["NSCA's Performance Training Journal"; Soccer: Be Your Own Nutritionist; Debra Wein; June 2004](#)
- "Food Guide for Soccer: Tips & Recipes From the Pros"; Gloria Averbuch and Nancy Clark; 2010
- [FIFA; F-MARC Nutrition for Football; September 2005](#)
- [US Youth Soccer; Four Common Myths About Nutrition Among Soccer Players; Donald T. Kirkendall](#)

Read more: <http://www.livestrong.com/article/520726-healthy-snacks-before-soccer/#ixzz246IVmPQW>

WHAT TO EAT BEFORE AND AFTER A SOCCER GAME

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Cycling champion Lance Armstrong is said to measure every ounce of food he eats. Top basketball players contract with private chefs to avoid consuming junk. As for soccer, London-based pro team Arsenal eats broccoli instead of chips and beer based on manager Arsene Wenger's philosophies on nutrition developed while working in Japan. If you want to perform at your best in soccer, you can take a page from the elites and eat correctly, especially before and after the game.

PREGAME

If you are slated to play for more than an hour, as you do in an adult game of 90 minutes or more, you need to practice pregame eating, says Gloria Averbuch and Nancy Clark in "Food Guide for Soccer." You need fuel for your muscles, and to deliver it, you need to train your digestive system in a manner similar to how you train your muscles and cardiovascular system. Experiment with pregame eating options to find the foods that work best for your body, and the timing and amounts that benefit you.

ELEMENTS

You need to prepare a pregame snack of carbohydrates, such as a bagel with peanut butter, oatmeal, a banana, yogurt or similar food. These can build on a pasta lunch before an afternoon game or an oatmeal and raisins breakfast, according to Averbuch and Clark. A granola bar or half a sandwich can also work. If you have a morning game, a substantial dinner the night before or late-night snacking can boost your liver glycogen stores, although you run some risk of putting on body fat based on eating heavily at the end of the day.

CARB LOADING

The publication "F-MARC Nutrition for Football," published by FIFA, the governing body of soccer, collects practical information on eating and drinking for soccer players. It concurs with the view prevalent since the early 1990s that carbohydrate loading in the days before a competition works to prepare the muscles for the energy demands placed on them. The publication recommends about 8 to 10 g per kilogram of body weight per day, which translates to 19 to 24 oz. if you weigh 150 pounds. Eat 1 to 4 g per kilogram of carbohydrate, or 2.5 to 10 oz. if you weigh 150 pounds, during the six-hour period before exercise. This can include cereal, fruit juice, bananas, toast, bread, muffins, fruit smoothies, pasta and similar foods.

RECOVERY

Recovery options after the game need to include carbohydrates to replace depleted energy stores and protein to rebuild weary muscles. For example, you can have trail mix, an apple and cheese sticks or a chicken dinner with rice and vegetables, according to "Food Guide for Soccer." Have the first snack within the first half-hour after the game, and then continue every two hours for the next four to six hours.

REFERENCES

- "Food Guide for Soccer: Tips & Recipes from the Pros"; Gloria Averbuch and Nancy Clark; 2010

- ["Nutrition and Football: The FIFA/FMARC Consensus on Sports Nutrition": Ron J. Maughan; 2006](#)
- [FIFA; F-MARC Nutrition for Football; September 2005](#)

Read more: <http://www.livestrong.com/article/407304-what-to-eat-before-and-after-a-soccer-game/#ixzz246ltyEln>