

# Eating During Competition

During competition, it's important to not only maintain proper hydration, but if you have the opportunity, fuel your body every 30 to 60 minutes. Endurance activities deplete your muscles' carbohydrate stores. Keep your muscles charged and your energy levels up with carbohydrates during your event. Some examples of foods to try are:

- Fresh fruit
- Dry cereal
- Peanut butter and jelly sandwich
- Crackers
- Sports drinks
- Fruit yogurt

If you are competing in events lasting several hours, solid foods will stave off hunger. Remember to drink plenty of fluid along with food. For many athletes, a combination of solid and liquid, such as banana and sports drink, works well.

Learn which combinations work best for you by experimenting with different drinks and foods during training. Don't wait until competition day to try something new.

## Eating Between Events and Heats

Two-a-day practices or competing in several events or heats over one or more days (tennis or wrestling tournaments, swim or track meets, or several basketball or soccer games) can present nutritional challenges. Some athletes may be short on time or not feel like eating between events; however, maintaining energy stores and staying hydrated are critical to performance.

The amount of time between events or heats determines the amount and type of food you eat. Make sure water and sports drinks are always available. The longer you have between competitions, the more you can eat since there is more time to digest food. Use the following tips to guide your choices:

### **ONE HOUR OR LESS** between events or heats, choose fluids or high-carbohydrate foods:

- Sports drinks
- Fruit
- Whole-grain toast or bagel with water
- Graham crackers with water
- Pudding cup

### **ONE- TO THREE-HOUR BREAKS**, try high-carbohydrate foods with lean protein:

- Bowl of cereal with low-fat milk
- A handful of grapes with fruit-flavored yogurt
- Almond butter and crackers
- String cheese and a banana
- Low-fat chocolate milk



### **THREE OR MORE HOURS**, a meal is the way to go:

- Pancakes topped with yogurt and berries, scrambled eggs and 100% fruit juice
- Turkey and cheese sandwich, baby carrots and low-fat milk
- Vegetable pizza with a mixed green salad
- Peanut butter sandwich on whole-grain bread, apple and low-fat chocolate milk

