

Traveling and game schedules can make it difficult for an athlete to follow their nutrition plan. Athletes need to be able to make smart nutrition decisions to maintain performance on the road.

GOALS FOR EATING ON THE ROAD

The main goal while being on the road is to maintain athletic performance. Balanced nutrition plays a big role in providing the fuel the body needs for peak performance. This can be difficult to achieve because food choices are not the same as they are at home. Traveling often involves having a meal at a restaurant, grabbing fast food, or eating in the car on the way to the field. While it is not always easy to eat nutritiously on the road, it is possible! The basic composition of meals should remain the same:

- **Carbohydrates:** An essential part of each meal, especially pre and post game meals to ensure adequate fuel and energy for performance.
- **Protein:** Consume a small amount of protein as part of a pre-game meal and a moderate portion of protein post-game for proper recovery.
- **Fat:** Healthy fats should be a part of each meal to help with energy balance and replacement of muscle energy stores.
- **Fluids:** Drink enough water to maintain hydration and make sure to replace fluids lost during games.

IDEAS FOR EATING OUT

It is important to be comfortable with finding high performance food options when eating out. Choosing a sit-down restaurant with healthy dishes would be ideal. When that is not an option use these ideas for choosing healthier options:

- **Fast Food:** Grilled chicken sandwich with tomato and lettuce on whole grain bun, grilled chicken salad with oil based dressing (i.e. vinaigrettes).
- **Sandwich Shops:** Lean meat (i.e. turkey) on whole grain bread with vegetable toppings. Choose soup or salad as side dishes.
- **Mexican:** Burrito or soft taco with grilled veggies and lean meat, salad with lean meat and low-fat dressing

Remember...

- *Make vegetables your first choice for a side dish.*
- *Make meals healthy: Choose grilled or baked options instead of fried.*
- *Ask for sauces and dressings on the side.*
- *Always plan ahead for fueling by never leaving home empty handed. Throw non-perishable snacks in your sports bag to always have a snack close by.*

The Checklist

- *Water bottle*
- *Quick fuel: trail mix, granola bar, fresh fruits, sport gel or drink.*
- *Lunchbox or cooler filled with nutritious, high performance foods. Use some of the ideas in this handout!*





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LUNCHBOX IDEAS FOR ROAD TRIPS

Packing a small cooler with nutritious foods will help while traveling where food options are not ideal. Fill the cooler with complete meals and/or snacks.

- Turkey and swiss sandwich on whole wheat bread with lettuce, tomatoes, and avocado, fruit salad, carrot sticks with hummus or low-fat dressing, and brown sugar coconut almonds.
- Tuna or chicken salad with whole grain crackers, granola bar, and Greek yogurt with fresh strawberries.
- Ham or turkey, cheddar cheese, spinach, sprouts, dried cranberries, and balsamic vinaigrette in a whole wheat tortilla, mixed nuts, and an apple.

This may be a good lunch when you don't have time to pack a cooler.

- Nut butter sandwich with honey or jam, celery sticks with hummus, orange slices, and a sport drink.

Trail Mix: Ingredients for Athletes

Common ingredients in trail mix include peanuts, cashews, dried fruits, chocolate bits, and an assortment of seeds. Mix in these extra special ingredients for added benefit: Goji berries, cacao nibs, and raw almonds.

- Goji berries - a red/orange berry that originates in Asia. They are filled with antioxidants, which can help reduce the physical stress exercises causes in the body.
- Cacao nibs - cacao nibs contain theobromine, which can stimulate the central nervous system similar to caffeine. This effect can benefit some athletes during exercise.
- Raw almonds - one of the top nutrient dense nuts available. They are a good source of vitamin E, calcium, fiber, riboflavin, niacin, and protein.

Lunchbox Snacks

Greek yogurt with fruit	Nonfat or low-fat Greek yogurt contains up to 23 grams of protein per cup. Top with a favorite fresh fruit.
Fresh fruit paired with low-fat cheese	Apple or pear slices with 1-2 ounces of cheese provides protein, calcium, carbohydrates and fiber.
Low-fat chocolate milk <i>Look for shelf stable chocolate milk, but if not available this item requires refrigeration or cooler with ice.</i>	Low-fat chocolate milk is a popular sport recovery drink. It provides high-quality protein with carbohydrates to promote recovery.
Fig or date bars	These tasty snacks contain carbohydrates and fiber. They are good post-exercise snacks to replenish energy stores.
Peanut butter sandwich	Nut butter on whole grain bread is a high energy, tasty, and portable snack. Nut butters have heart healthy fat and are high in protein.
Pistachios	A one ounce serving is 49 nuts. Pistachios have fewer calories and more potassium per serving than other nuts. They are also high in fiber and vitamin B6.