Eating Right for Exercise

Eating well and getting enough physical activity are essential to your health. What to eat, when to eat, and what to drink are important to consider before you exercise.

What to Eat

- **Carbohydrates** – Your body uses carbohydrates for energy during exercise. Whole grain pasta, rice, breads, cereals, vegetables and fruit are good sources of carbohydrates.
- **Protein** – Eating protein helps your muscles repair and grow. Choosing foods such as turkey, roast beef, chicken, tuna, salmon, eggs and beans will ensure you are getting enough protein in your diet.

When to Eat

- Eat or drink a small breakfast to give yourself some energy if you exercise first thing in the morning.
- Eat meals at least 2-4 hours **before** exercising, especially if it's a large meal.
- Eat within two hours **after** exercising. The key is to eat something that contains both carbohydrates and protein, such as a banana and yogurt.
- Don't skip meals. This may cause you to feel lightheaded during exercise.

What to Drink

- **Water** – Remaining hydrated during exercise is important. Water is the best choice to stay hydrated when physical activity is 60 minutes or less. Drink water before, during and after exercising to replace lost fluids. Drink more water on days when the temperature and humidity are high.
- **Sports Drinks** – If you are exercising for more than 60 minutes, adding a sports drink might be helpful to balance your electrolytes. Look for sports drinks that are low in calories and sugar.
- **Diluted 100% fruit juice** – Mixing water with a small amount of 100% fruit juice can be a healthy alternative to plain water.

> **Staying hydrated is essential when you are exercising**
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> **Signs of dehydration may include:**
> ▶ Excessive thirst
> ▶ Skin is hot to the touch
> ▶ Fatigue
> ▶ Mental confusion
> ▶ Dry skin

Source: Eating and exercise: Time it right to maximize your workout. www.MayoClinic.com