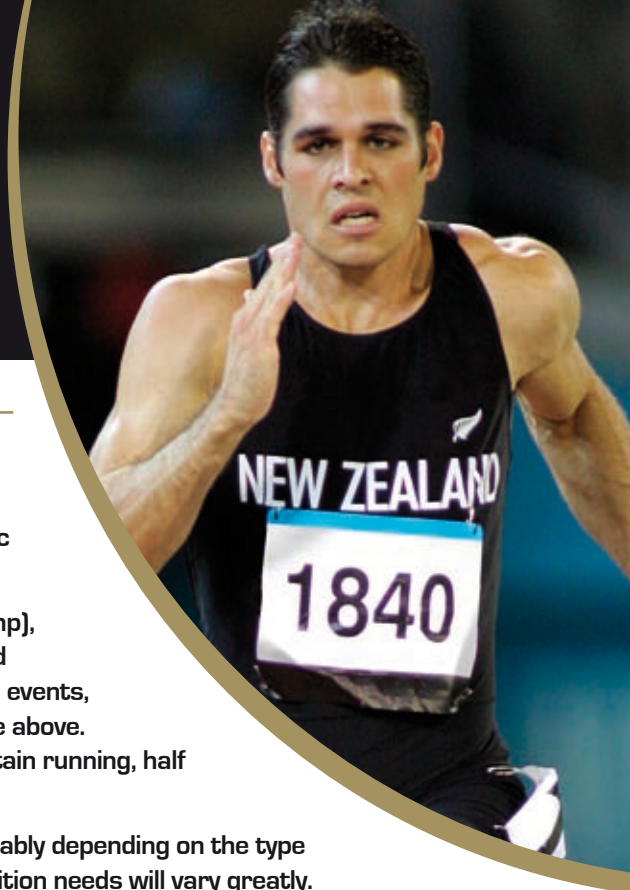


ATHLETICS

EATING FOR YOUR SPORT



YOUR SPORT:

Athletics is a diverse sport enjoyed at all levels from the school sports field to the Olympic track. At the elite level, athletes are likely to train for specific individual or group events. These events occur worldwide, all year round.

Events for athletics range from explosive jumping events (long and high jump), throwing strength events (shot put, discus, hammer and javelin), sprint and running events (100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m, 3000m) to hurdling events, steeplechase, and heptathlon - a competition including a combination of the above.

Other events that may fall under this banner include walking events, mountain running, half marathon and road events.

With such a wide range of events, the physique of athletes differs considerably depending on the type of athletics that they are involved in, it is no surprise that training and nutrition needs will vary greatly.

In competitive athletics, particularly at the elite level, athletes will train most days of the week. This is likely to consist of a combination of skill and technique drills and endurance or weight training.

TYPES OF EVENTS:

SHORTER EXPLOSIVE EVENTS

These require a significant amount of strength training as muscle mass is needed for power in short sprints and throws.

ENDURANCE RUNNING EVENTS

These require more aerobic (endurance) training. Endurance athletes are likely to be leaner than those training for power events.

TRAINING DIET:

Nutrition requirements will vary depending on the specific event an athlete is training for. However, whatever the event, it is essential to get the basics of nutrition right!

Aim to include:

- Fruits and vegetables – aim for a variety of colours
- Breads and cereals – pasta, rice, bread, rolled oats, breakfast cereal, kumara, potatoes and noodles
- Dairy products - low fat milk, yoghurt and cheese
- Protein rich foods including lean meat, fish, chicken, eggs, tofu and pulses
- Healthy fats like vegetable oils, nuts, seeds and avocado



CARBOHYDRATE

Carbohydrate rich foods provide fuel for training. The longer the training session the more carbohydrate will be required. An endurance trained athlete is therefore likely to need a diet higher in carbohydrate than a strength trained athlete as they spend more time exercising without rest.

Basing meals and snacks on healthy carbohydrate rich foods is ideal. This includes oats, grainy breads and crackers, pasta, rice, noodles and starchy vegetables like potato and kumara.

During and after intense training sessions, additional carbohydrate rich foods and drinks can be helpful to provide extra fuel and help with recovery. Bagels, wraps, cereal bars and sports drinks are some ideas.

For optimal muscle recovery it is ideal to include some protein as well as carbohydrate after training. Liquid breakfast drinks, fruit and yoghurt smoothies and creamed rice are a few ideas.

NOTE: For those athletes who regularly do high intensity training over 90 minutes, using additional high GI carbohydrate sports drinks, gels and lollies during and after training may be required. Speak to a Sports Dietitian/ Nutritionist for more information.

PROTEIN

Protein is important for all athletes but is particularly essential for muscle strength and muscle recovery. Athletes doing strength training are therefore likely to require more protein than those doing endurance training.

Including protein in all meals and most snacks can help meet protein needs. This includes lean meats, fish, chicken, eggs, pulses (e.g. chickpeas, kidney beans, lentils, and baked beans), nuts and dairy products. Including protein as part of a post training snack is important for athletes undergoing strength training or very heavy sessions, as this will assist in recovery.

FAT

For all athletes it is important to include some healthy fats each day including avocado, nuts, seeds, oily fish and vegetable oils. The amount of these fats that are needed will depend on the individual's weight goals and energy requirements (i.e. how many calories/kJs they need each day).

For all athletes, unhealthy fats such as trans or saturated fats should be avoided as much as possible. This includes the skin on chicken, white fat on meat, butter and fat often used in cakes, biscuits and many takeaways.

FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Fruit and vegetables are essential for good health and performance

and should be included at every main meal. Including a range of fresh, frozen, dried and canned varieties will help meet your nutrient and antioxidant requirements. These options are generally convenient, tasty and affordable.

Adding vegetables into cooking or fruit to your meals is also a great way to boost your fibre, vitamin and mineral intake. Try slicing a banana or pear onto breakfast cereal; add dried fruit to salads or incorporate grated carrot and courgette into mince.

TIMING YOUR EATING

With all training, the timing of meals and snacks is very important to make sure that there is enough fuel onboard to last for the session and enough afterwards to help with recovery! When athletes train hard, eating a meal as soon as possible after exercise can assist recovery.

If this is not practical, a snack becomes important to start the recovery process. Dairy based snacks such as yoghurt or milk-based MILO, creamed rice or flavoured milk, fruit, sandwiches and low fat muesli bars are also good options.

In some cases, including a sports drink during training can be useful, particularly if it is a warm day or you are likely to be sweating heavily. This will however, depend on the intensity of your training sessions and your goals.



A SAMPLE ONE DAY MEAL PLAN FOR ATHLETICS

BREAKFAST:

- Natural muesli with fresh fruit and yoghurt/low fat milk OR
- Wholegrain toast with poached eggs, tomato and spinach and a glass of fruit juice OR
- Hot oats and a piece of fruit or a glass of fruit juice

If travelling, pack a combination of fresh fruit, milk drinks or fruit juice carton with yoghurt, cereal bars or sandwiches

MORNING TEA:

- Dried fruit and raw nuts OR
- Wholegrain crackers with cottage cheese and avocado OR
- MILO made with low fat milk and fresh fruit

LUNCH:

- Wholegrain bread rolls or wrap filled with hummus, lean meat/canned fish and salad ingredients OR
- Pasta/rice with tuna and vegetables

Add a piece of fruit and/or yoghurt to each option

PRE AFTERNOON TRAINING:

- Good snacks prior to training may include sandwiches, fruit toast with peanut butter and jam, dairy snacks, smoothies, muesli bars or fruit

DURING/AFTER TRAINING

Drink a bottle of water. May need sports drink if over 90 minutes of training

DINNER:

- Lean meat and vegetable stir-fry with rice or noodles OR
- Spaghetti Bolognese with a side salad
- Fish and oven baked chips with salad

SUPPER:

- Hot MILO made with low fat milk

NUTRITIONIST'S NOTE

This meal is a general example only. It should be altered to suit individual energy requirements depending on age, gender and training load. For those who train at an elite level and/or twice or more a day additional pre training snacks and post training recovery food/drinks will be required. Contact a Sports Dietitian for guidance.

NUTRITION PROFILE: SARAH COWLEY

Why do you think nutrition is important for your sport?

Heptathlon is a multi-event sport with varied training sessions so it is very important to recover properly between those sessions. If you get the nutrition right, physically and mentally you are in a better place.

What are some healthy and tasty foods you recommend?

Cottage cheese is excellent – it is a good protein source and can be teamed up with so many foods, so easy to have in lots of your meals. Natural yoghurt is a great dairy product and goes well with fruit or cereal. Tuna is so convenient and a good source of omega fats. Poached eggs are also great. Not to forget vegetables, the more the better!



KEY FOODS FOR AN ATHLETE'S PANTRY

- ✓ Pasta and rice
- ✓ Wholegrain bread
- ✓ Noodles
- ✓ Muesli
- ✓ UNCLE TOBYS Rolled Oats
- ✓ MILO Energy Food Drink
- ✓ Pretzels and rice crackers
- ✓ Low fat biscuits/crackers
- ✓ Canned tuna/salmon
- ✓ Baked Beans
- ✓ CARNATION Light & Creamy Evaporated Milk
- ✓ Nuts and seeds
- ✓ Fresh fruit
- ✓ Dried and tinned fruit
- ✓ Vegetable oil/spray oil

KEY FOODS FOR AN ATHLETE'S FRIDGE/FREEZER

- ✓ Low fat yoghurt
- ✓ Cottage cheese
- ✓ Hummus
- ✓ Low fat milk (green/yellow top)
- ✓ Light cheese/cheese sticks
- ✓ Fresh vegetables
- ✓ Frozen vegetables

COACHES NUTRITION TIP

Russ Hoggard - Athletic Development Programme Manager

Most recreational athletes and some experienced high level athletes really sell themselves short when it comes to good nutrition!

Serious athletics requires 24/7 dedication and eating the right foods at the right time is all part of the equation.

Here is my advice, "Get some professional advice in this area...straight away!" Your old Uncle Bill may well have played for King Country in his youth but he probably trained on beer and fish 'n chips. We know better than that now.



COMPETITION DAY EATING

Athletics carnivals will place different demands on competitors depending on the type, timing and number of events they participate in. Whether athletes are involved in a single event or multiple events, nutrition planning for competition day is vital.

- Events are usually outdoors, so keeping on top of hydration is essential. Make sure there is good access to water and sports drinks if needed. If they are not available at the event centre, be sure to take your own. Cooling practises are also important for outdoor events and may include wearing a cap/hat or sitting out of the sun in a cool place.
- Steering clear of high fat foods is important, as they are unlikely to provide the right type of fuel (carbohydrate) needed for the event. They can also be the cause of stomach upsets for some people.
- The time between events will affect the size of your meals and snacks. If there is a three to four hour break between events, then aim for larger meals like sandwiches, pasta or rice with some protein added. For shorter time frames aim for small snacks or liquid

based meals.

- Be sure to plan your food and fluid choices before each competition and pack your own food before you go, as many event centres will have unsuitable options.
- It is important for parents, athletes and team management to work together to develop a plan for travel, game and competition day fuelling.

For more information on race eating requirements for endurance events, see the distance running nutrition advice sheet.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRE-COMPETITION:

- ✓ Yoghurt and dairy snacks
- ✓ Flavoured milks and MILO
- ✓ Fruit
- ✓ Muesli Bars and cereal bars
- ✓ Sandwiches
- ✓ Muffins/Crumpets/Fruit bread
- ✓ Rice cakes
- ✓ Low fat crackers and biscuits
- ✓ Cordial
- ✓ Sports drinks
- ✓ Water-based Ice-blocks
- ✓ Liquid meal supplements
- ✓ Rice, pasta or noodles

SPECIAL ISSUES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR ATHLETICS:

- Eating well when travelling is an important consideration. Aim to research the types of foods and fluids that will be available at the destination and at the event centre before you go. This may involve either advising those organising accommodation of your requirements or taking a self-catering option. If events are overseas it can be very important to watch food safety and practise good food hygiene.
- It can be a struggle to eat enough food and drink enough fluids before and after training sessions. Planning is therefore important. Ensure that your fridge and pantry are well stocked and keep portable foods on hand (i.e. in the car or in your bag)
- Supplements that can be helpful in athletics will vary according to the events you are training for. If used at all, supplements should only be used to enhance a healthy diet, not replace it. It is best to work with an Accredited Sports Nutritionist or Sports Dietitian to assess your individual goals.
- If fat loss is a goal, be sure to monitor portion sizes and keep excess fat, alcohol and sugar to a minimum.

PEPPERED BEEF WITH CARAMELISED ONION COUSCOUS

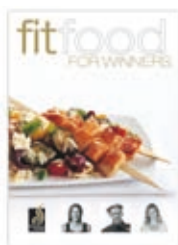
Serves 4

olive or canola oil spray
3 onions, sliced
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 ½ cups couscous
2 tsp MAGGI Chicken Stock Powder
juice and rind of 1 lemon
2 cups boiling water
2 tbsp whole grain mustard
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
4 lean beef fillet steaks
freshly ground black pepper
2 cups baby spinach leaves

- Spray a non-stick frying pan with oil and heat. Add onions and cook over medium heat for 8 minutes or until soft and golden, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and stir in balsamic vinegar.
- Place couscous, stock powder, lemon juice and rind in a bowl. Pour over boiling water. Cover and stand for 5 minutes. Stir in caramelised onions, mustard and parsley.
- Sprinkle both sides of beef with ground black pepper. Place under preheated grill and cook for 3-4 minutes each side.

- To serve, place spinach leaves on plates, top with couscous. Slice beef and place on top.

ANALYSIS	per serve
Energy (kJ)	2179
Carbohydrate (g)	59
Protein (g)	39
Fat (g)	14



This recipe is from the *Fit Food for Winners* cookbook. To order your copy, visit www.nestle.co.nz.