

Pre-Game Nutrition

For help with an individualized nutrition plan, contact the Sports Dietitian with Northside Hospital Sports Medicine at **404-327-1626**.



Why is nutrition before sports important?

Food and hydration before practice or a game helps make sure that your body has the fuel that it needs to make it through the game or match. This will help:

- **Increase energy:** provide fuel to your muscles and brain so they have the energy they need to make it through the game
- **Enhance performance:** proper fueling helps maintain your energy levels and focus throughout the game
- **Maximize recovery:** your muscles need protein and carbohydrates to repair themselves and get stronger

What to eat and drink before practice or a game

Carbohydrates provide your body with energy and fuel to perform and help enhance recovery.

Fruit, bread, pasta, potatoes, sweet potatoes, crackers, cereal, other grain products, milk, and yogurt

Proteins provide your body with the building blocks to repair muscles damaged during exercise, which can help reduce soreness and improve recovery.

Chicken, fish, beef, pork, eggs, beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, milk, yogurt and cheese

Fluids help make sure that you are well hydrated, which can help maintain performance and focus.

Water for games lasting 60 minutes or less
Sports drink with carbs and electrolytes (such as Powerade or Gatorade) for games more than 60 minutes

What and how much you eat depends on how long before practice or a game you are eating. The longer you have, the more you are able to eat without upsetting your stomach. Be sure to include a meal or snack within 3 hours before your game.

Timing	Sources of Fuel	Food Examples
1-3 hours before	Small meal or large snack with 16-20 ounces of water	Peanut butter and jelly sandwich Peanut butter and banana Low fat yogurt with fruit and granola Turkey and cheese sandwich
30-60 minutes before	Easy to digest carbohydrates with 8-12 ounces of water	A piece of fruit, applesauce, pretzels or crackers
Within 30 minutes before	8-10 ounces of water or 8-10 ounces of sports drink if last meal or snack was more than 3 hours before	Water or Sports drink (Gatorade, Powerade, etc.)