

Eating for Swimmers

To maintain energy levels and to build muscle, swimmers need to eat 5-6 meals a day and must start with a BIG breakfast. Each meal should have a protein and a carbohydrate. Increased protein is needed during the season to maintain and build muscle. Below is a list of good carbohydrates (used for energy) and good proteins (needed for muscle building). Swimmers should have snacks to eat between classes at school. PB n J sandwiches, protein bars and fruit are good.

Carbohydrates: Pasta, bread/bagels, rice, potatoes, oatmeal, vegetables and fruit.

Protein: Chicken, turkey, fish/tuna, meat, soy, milk, protein shakes, and eggs.

{Below are some meal suggestions, and although not typical, make a great breakfast.}

Meal Suggestions

Spaghetti with meat	PB & J or turkey w/cheese sandwich
Oatmeal	Eggs and toast or bagel
Mac -N-Cheese	Rice mixed with hamburger and veggies
Pizza	Meatloaf or roast w/ potatoes
Any kind of potatoes covered in cheese, meat, veggies, etc.	

Eating before and after practice

A good meal should be eaten about 3 hours before practice as it takes about 3 hours for solid food to be digested and used for energy. Liquids, fruits, and small snacks can be eaten closer to practice but more than that will cause stomach aches and will actually reduce your energy for practice.

A good meal after practice is important to help build and repair muscles. Chocolate milk is perfect right after practice and then a big meal about 30-60 minutes after practice.

*****Swimmers who practice longer than 1 hour should bring a bottle of water or sports drink to have during practice.**

Eating for swim meets

Begin drinking lots of water the day before. (1/2 -1 ounces per lb of bodyweight per day)
Eat a good pasta meal the night before and then another good meal 3 hours before the meet. (Pasta, oatmeal, potatoes, bread, rice) Keep drinking steady the day of the meet. No sugar and very limited meat or dairy. (They are hard to digest)

During the meet continue drinking water or low/no sugar sports drink. Our meets are short and little or no food is necessary. (At most a small healthy snack.) A good meal 3 hours before the meet is really all you need and the food you eat during a swim meet will just sit in your stomach and provide no real energy.