

TRAVEL AND RESTAURANT TIPS



Athletes are frequently required to travel away from home to competitions and training camps. Both the journey and living in a new environment can make it challenging to maintain a high performance diet essential for optimal sport performances. The nutrition pitfalls of travel can be easily avoided through anticipating the upcoming scenarios and making a few plans.

Experienced athletes stay on track by:

- Planning, preparing, and carrying with them portable foods and fluids
- Choosing the best of the foods on offer during air and road travel
- Making optimal restaurant meal choices
- Planning and preparing simple meals at their destination accommodation

The Basics

High performance nutrition requires a low-fat, high carbohydrate diet from a wide variety of whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and fruit yogurt, with ample fluids and lean protein (fish, poultry, eggs, meats, tofu, and low-fat dairy products).

Knowing What to Expect

In advance, athletes should be aware of their mode of travel (driving, bus, air), the expected duration of travel, whether stops will be made en route to purchase foods and use the washroom. Athletes are advised to eat often (every 3 or 4 hours) to maintain energy. Washroom breaks should be scheduled so athletes do not reduce their fluid consumption and risk dehydration.

Portable Travel Food Ideas

To ensure food safety, pack a **small cooler** containing: boiled eggs, yogurt, cheese, sandwiches, wraps, raw vegetables, pasta/rice/bean salads, and fresh fruit.

Additional **non-perishable** travel foods could include: dried fruit, dried fruit bars, trailmix, nuts, juice boxes, fruit cups, applesauce, dry cereal, cereal/sport/energy/protein bars, crackers, tuna or baked beans with a flip top lid, peanut butter sandwiches.

One personal water bottle may not be sufficient to cover fluid needs for the entire journey. Make sure there is enough fluid available on-board or ensure adequate fluid stops.

Pack microwave-safe dishes (bowl, plate), cutlery, a can opener and a paring knife for use in your hotel room. Some of these will be needed en route as well.

Planning

Prior to travel, the coach, team manager and/or athlete should inquire about the availability of cooking facilities and convenient restaurants close to their eventual accommodation, determining:

- Are breakfasts available and at what hours? Which specific foods and fluids are served?
- Are fridges, freezers and/or microwaves in hotel rooms?
- Are there kitchenette units with complete dishware and cookware available?
- Which restaurants are situated near the hotel and sport venue; what are their hours?

Breakfast Suggestions

Boiled/scrambled/poached eggs, French toast, omelettes, pancakes, waffles, English muffins, bagels, bread/toast, dry cereal, oatmeal, low-fat muffins, yogurt, cheese, fresh and dried fruit, fruit salad, unsweetened juices, low-fat milk.

Limit: pastries-Danishes/doughnuts, cinnamon buns, sugary cereals, bacon, sausages, fried eggs, hashbrowns, fruit punch/fruit drinks.

When Fast Food is the Only Option

Sometimes fast food is the only thing available. Most fast food meals provide ample protein and carbohydrate, though they usually contain excessive dietary fat and sodium, and lack fruit and vegetables. To make the best of a fast food situation:

Avoid:

- Mayonnaise-based sauces, pastries, gravy, salad dressing, fried and breaded foods (e.g. French fries, chicken fingers), bacon, processed cheese, and sausage meats.

Select:

- Vegetable and fruit-based items such as salads, sliced apples, applesauce, baked potatoes, vegetable side-dishes, yogurt and berries, unsweetened juices, and fruit smoothies
- Submarine, wrap and/or pita whole wheat sandwiches
- Greek-style meat or poultry kabobs with pita bread and Greek salad
- Stir fry meals with vegetables, meat/poultry/tofu, and rice or noodles
- Mexican soft tacos or burritos with rice (limit the guacamole, cheese, sour cream)
- Baked potato, salad with light dressing, grilled chicken burger
- Pasta with meat sauce, salad, and bun
- Scrambled eggs, yogurt with berries, English muffin

Hotel Room Nutrition

If athletes are limited to a small fridge, freezer, and microwave in their hotel room they could still prepare nutritious, high performance meals with some creativity. Microwaves can be used to cook oatmeal, scramble eggs, and heat "healthy" frozen microwaveable meals (look for the "Health Check" symbol in Canadian grocery stores). For quick meal and snack solutions keep fridges stocked up with fresh fruits, milk, yogurt, raw veggies, bagels, low-fat muffins, bread, wraps, cheese, cheesestings, low-fat deli meats, and peanut or almond butter.

For more information and helpful ideas when travelling, read the following tip sheets:

- [Nutrition Away from Home](#)
- [Checklist for the Travelling Athlete and Coach](#)
- [Long Distance Travel](#)
- [Tournament Tips](#)

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