

Sport Foods

Athlete Scenario

I am training for my first marathon and looking for sport foods and beverages to help supplement my training diet. I am confused by all the different kinds of products at the store. How do I know which to choose?

Advantages of Sport Foods and Beverages

Carbohydrate-rich sport foods (sports drinks, bars and gels) can improve exercise performance. Consider using sport foods for **exercise lasting longer than 1 hour**.

Goals of Sport Foods and Beverages:

- Maintain blood glucose levels
- Promote hydration and electrolyte balance
- Optimize exercise performance

Categories:

Sports Drinks

- Primary Use: Provide fluid, carbohydrate and electrolytes and prevent excess fluid losses (>2% of body weight lost as fluid) in hot or humid environments
- Composition: Carbohydrate-based (~15 grams per 8 ounces) with electrolytes

Sports Bars

- Primary Use: Portable source of carbohydrate and protein
- Composition: Generally 40-60 grams of carbohydrate and 6-20 grams of protein

Sports Gels, Gummies, and Beans

- Primary Use: Provide bite-sized carbohydrates
- Composition: 20-25 grams of carbohydrate per serving (may contain caffeine, electrolytes or vitamins)

	SPORTS DRINK	SPORTS BARS	SPORTS GELS, GUMMIES, & BEANS
PRE-EXERCISE	15-20 ounces 1-2 hours before exercise	High-carbohydrate, moderate-protein, lower-fat bar 1-2 hours before exercise	1-2 servings per hour to supplement diet
DURING EXERCISE	6-12 ounces every 15-20 minutes	High-carbohydrate, low in protein and fat	1-2 servings per hour depending on fueling needs along with 4-8 ounces of water
POST-EXERCISE	24 ounces per pound of body weight lost	High-carbohydrate, high-protein bar within 15-60 minutes after exercise	1-2 gels to supplement recovery foods containing protein

Written by SCAN registered dietitian nutritionists (RDNs) to provide nutrition guidance. The key to optimal meal planning is individualization. Contact a SCAN RDN or a Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics (CSSD) for personalized nutrition plans. Access "Find a SCAN RDN" at www.scandpg.org or by phone at 800.249.2875.



Tips to Take With You

1. Try new sport foods during training sessions to determine which products work best for you before competition.
2. Use sport foods as supplements to a balanced diet.
3. Meet with a Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics (CSSD) to determine appropriate use of sport foods to meet your fueling and hydration goals.

Contact SCAN
www.scandpg.org
800.249.2875