

Prairie Soccer • Nutrition and Hydration **Prepare for tomorrow today**

As with every post-season, body & time management is key. When the last minute arrives, are we going to be as best prepared as possible?... the answer will be yes.

We all are aware of the benefits of “carbo-cramming” and a good night’s rest before a match, but it’s equally important that we get proper nutrition just before and following a game to maximize our physical energy level and recovery.

General Game Preparation & Recovery to Maximize Energy (during stretches of multiple games / playoffs)

In general, energy levels (muscle glycogens) can be built up and/or entirely restored **within 24 hours of a match** by practicing basic nutritional standards with a solid diet:

- Meals heavy on complex carbohydrates prior to AND after games
- Healthy Snacks (again, carb based)
- Hydration before AND after games

Foods high in carbs:

- Pasta, Rice, Breads, Fish
- Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
- Lean Meats (Turkey / Chicken)
- Low Fat Milks & Fruit Juices (non sugary)

Avoid:

- Fried / Fatty Foods
- Pastries
- Canned Fruits
- Sodas / Candies
- Butters / Heavy Sauces

****An athlete’s plate during a time of multiple matches / recovery (24 hours prior to and after matches) should consist mostly of carbs with some lean meats:**

- 65-70% complex carbs
- 20-25% fats
- 10% proteins

****Fluids – awareness of fluid intake should begin several days before competition... especially under hot / humid conditions.**

- Water, Juice, Milk are great with meals
- Replacing water after practice is essential
- Avoid Soda / Caffeinated drinks

Cont.

Pre-Match / Game Day Preparation

(2-4 hours prior to game)

Foods

- Pancakes, Oatmeal, Bagels, Toast with Honey (breakfast prior to a mid-day match)
- Pasta, Potatoes, Breads (lunch before an afternoon game)
- Lean Meats and Vegetables
- Fresh Fruit

**If longer period before game time (ex breakfast before an evening game) be sure to include more proteins.

****Eat until satisfied, but do not overeat.**

Hydration

- Water is great for replacing fluids and hydrating over a longer period of time (keeping a water bottle with you throughout the day)
- A 20oz Sports Drink (*2 hours prior to game time) may provide additional benefits beyond that of water alone
- *Avoid energy drinks* (Red Bull, etc)

Pre-match Snack (just prior to the match beginning)

- Energy bars high in carbs (NOT protein bars) *the higher the carbs and the lower the fat / protein the better *do not overeat and feel full
- Sport Gels

Recovery

*Equally important, although often overlooked and required to jumpstart recovery for the next game. Without proper attention and nutrition, it becomes very difficult if not impossible to regain full recovery between matches.

Post-match Snack (must be within 45-60 minutes)

- Chocolate Milk *a perfect combination of carbs, sugars and protein
- Snacks *high in carbs such as Bananas, Bagels with honey and Raisins
- Energy Bars high in carbs low in fat / protein
- Sport Drinks *water is good, but a sport drink is better for recovery following a match
- **During the playoffs, the team will be providing a light post-match spread in the team room to ensure that team members are getting the proper nutrients within that 45 min window.**

Post-match Meal

- High in carbs, similar to the pre-match meal
*If the night before another game (back to back) a late-night snack such as a fruit smoothie is beneficial as well.

In the end, through **proper rest, pre-match preparation & post-match recovery**, we will do everything we can to be prepared in this ***controllable*** aspect of performance during the post-season.