



Center for Integrative Oncology and Survivorship

Exercise Nutrition Tips

Exercise and good nutrition go hand in hand. The more you work out, the more energy you will have—but only if you are providing your body with the right kind of fuel.

Your Body's Protein Needs

Protein is essential to your body for maintaining muscle mass, which is a major factor in long-term health and quality of life. Protein also helps your body with tissue repair and supports your immune system. Try to include a variety of sources of lean protein in your diet, such as chicken, nuts, seeds, beans, eggs and fish.

A simple way to estimate your daily protein needs is to take your body weight and divide that number by 2.2 to convert it to kilograms (kg). Then, take your weight in kg and multiple by 0.8 to estimate the number of grams (g) of protein you need to consume daily. For example, for a 150-pound person, the recommended daily amount of protein is approximately 55g:

- 150/2.2=68.18kg;
• 68.18x0.8=54.5g

Drink Plenty of Water

Your average intake of water should be about 64 ounces (8 cups) a day. You'll need to drink more when you exercise, because your body is losing fluid through sweat. You don't need electrolyte replacement drinks like Gatorade during exercise unless you are participating in high-intensity exercise for longer than 60 minutes.

Fuel Your Workout

Plan to eat a healthy snack one to three hours prior to exercising. The snack should consist of a healthy carbohydrate and a lean protein. Some examples are suggested in the table below:

Table with 2 columns: Healthy Carbohydrates, Lean Proteins. Rows include: 1 piece whole grain bread or 5-6 crackers; 1 cup low fat milk*; 1/2 cup whole grain cereal or 1 granola bar; 4-6 ounces low fat yogurt*; 1 small piece fruit; 1/2 cup vegetables; 1 tbsp. peanut butter or handful of nuts/seeds; 2 tbsp. hummus; 1/2 cup cottage cheese or 1 ounce sliced cheese; 1/2 cup beans*; 1 ounce unprocessed meat; 1 egg. Footer: Foods with an * indicate a combined food that contains both a carbohydrate and a protein source

Recover Post-workout

Try to eat a small meal or snack about 20 minutes after completing a workout. This should be a well-balanced snack consisting of healthy carbohydrates, lean protein, and a fruit or vegetable.

Protein Powders and Bars

Most people can meet their protein needs through food sources alone, without the aid of protein supplements. A 3-ounce serving of chicken provides 28g of protein, and one-half cup of beans can provide up to 11g of protein. However, you may prefer the convenience of a protein bar or powder. If you are considering a powder supplement, look for 100% whey protein powders. There are also plant-based options such as pea protein or hemp protein powders. With protein bars, take note of the sugar content as many have a high amount of added sugar. Look for protein bars with less than 10g sugar.