

## Nutrition for Recovery

by Shelley Macyunas

Athletes spend a great deal of time preparing for competitions. Race preparation for swimmers includes many swim practices, cross-training, resistance or weight training and good nutrition. What some swimmers seem to forget is the recovery phase following training and competition. Nutrition for recovery is necessary to prepare one's body for the next race or workout.

Aerobic activity utilizes the body's glycogen stores that are refueled by carbohydrates. Swim practices, which require a longer duration of exercise than races, could be classified as more aerobic. During aerobic exercise, the body's preferred fuel source is carbohydrate. Stored fat is an alternative energy source that is used primarily after glycogen stores have been depleted. Fortunately, the stored fat provides a nearly unlimited supply of energy unlike our glycogen stores.

There is a proportion of anaerobic activity that exists while swimming and this proportion increases as we use more power and less endurance—most common in sprinting. Sprint distance races, less than 2 minutes in length require anaerobically derived energy sources such as glycogen and phosphocreatine. A swimmer could prepare for this by eating high carbohydrate foods prior to an event. However, it would be equally beneficial to consume additional carbohydrates after swimming.

Recommended levels of carbohydrate include 1.0 to 1.5 grams per kilogram of body weight within 30 minutes after a workout in addition to regular meal and snack consumption of high carb foods.

What does this mean for you?? How much carbohydrate do you need after a workout?? Time to get out your calculator and determine what you need for your own nutritional recovery!

Example:

Sammy Swimmer weighs 170 lbs and requires 77-116 grams of carbohydrate within 30 minutes after a workout. Samples of good recovery snacks for Sammy might include:

1 Power Bar (41 g) and 8 oz cranberry juice (36 g)

1 bran muffin (49 g) and 1 cup applesauce (60 g)

2 slices cheese pizza (39 g each)

1 cup low fat frozen yogurt (34 g) and ½ cup raisins (59 g)

1 chocolate sundae (53 g) and 1 medium banana (27 g)

1 cup low fat granola cereal (85 g) and 1 cup milk (12 g)

1 cup oatmeal (24 g) and 16 oz apple juice (56 g)

Shelley Macyunas is a Registered Dietitian from Naperville. She has been in practice for four years and is a consultant in the Chicagoland area. Her favorite part of her career is working with amateur athletes—especially swimmers. Shelley has been swimming with Naperville Waves Swim Club since 2002.