

# Eating for Recovery

## Athlete Scenario

*The day after a hard soccer practice my legs feel heavy and sluggish. My performance the next day suffers because I'm sore and tired. I usually drink water or a sports drink during practice and games. What can I do so I have more energy at practice to perform better?*

## The Goals of Nutrition Recovery

- Replace fuel (carbohydrate) utilized by muscles during training. Consume a snack or meal within an hour following training or competition.
- Restore fluid and electrolytes (sodium and potassium) lost through sweat; weigh yourself before and after exercise to determine how much to replenish (see Exercise Hydration fact sheet for more details).
- Eat 15-25 grams of high-quality protein to aid in repair of damaged muscle tissue and to stimulate muscle protein synthesis.

## Recovery Fluids and Snacks

- Smoothie with low-fat milk + spinach or kale + frozen fruit
- Graham crackers with peanut butter + low-fat chocolate milk + banana
- Carbohydrate-electrolyte sports drink + sport bar containing carbohydrate & protein
- Whole wheat pita chips + hummus + 100% juice
- Greek yogurt + berries + whole grain cereal + water
- Dried fruit & nut trail mix + water

## Recovery Meal Ideas

- Sandwich wrap with turkey & spinach + fruit bowl + low-fat milk
- Rice bowl with beans cheese, salsa, avocado + whole grain tortilla chips or whole wheat tortilla
- Grilled protein such as fish, chicken or steak + broccoli, bell peppers, carrots + roasted sweet potatoes
- Stir-fried tofu & veggies + quinoa + bowl of soup
- Veggie omelet + whole wheat toast + apple slices



## Tips to Take With You

1. Recovery nutrition and hydration are particularly important if you have 2 training sessions/day or your next training session is within 8 hours.
2. Plan ahead and keep recovery fuel readily accessible in your gym bag.
3. If you do not have an appetite or have minimal time following a training session, choose liquids (e.g. smoothies) or start with a small snack that contributes to your recovery goals.