



# Fueling Baseball Players

## Fueling Your Sport

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- Baseball is a skill sport requiring fine motor control, superb coordination, and quick reaction time.
- Baseball players do not need to eat extra calories because baseball is not a game of continuous activity. Pitchers and catchers need more calories than infielders and outfielders. A 183-pound pitcher burns about 900 calories in 2 hours of play, whereas a fielder burns only 610 calories in 2 hours. That is not a lot of calories when you consider that a fast food burger with medium fries and a drink has 750 calories.
- Baseball players need 2.3 to 3.2 grams of carbohydrate per pound of body weight per day (5 to 7 g/kg/day). Good sources of carbohydrates include whole grain breads and cereals, fruits, and vegetables.
- Baseball players need 0.55 to 0.8 grams of protein per pound of body weight per day (1.2 to 1.7 g/kg/day). Good choices for protein include fish, chicken, turkey, beef, low-fat milk, cheese, yogurt, eggs, nuts, and soy.
- Baseball players need 0.45 grams of fat per pound of body weight per day (1 g/kg/day). Choose heart-healthy fats like canola oil, olive oil, and nuts.

## Fluid Needs

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- The most important nutrient for a baseball player is water.
- During spring training or preseason workouts include “fluid training” to train yourself to get in the habit of drinking often to stay hydrated.
- Drink 2 cups (16 ounces) of water or sport drink 2 hours before practice and games.
- During practice and games, drink during warm-ups and between innings.
- Don't rely on thirst to tell you when to drink.

- Weigh yourself before and after practice and games. For every pound lost, drink about 3 cups of fluid.
- Water is fine for games in cooler weather, but choose sport drinks when the weather is hot and humid.

## Supplements Commonly Used in Baseball

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- Creatine is popular in baseball, but it isn't known whether creatine will give you a more powerful swing. Creatine can help you to train by providing more of a substance called “phosphocreatine” in muscles.
- Creatine does not increase muscle cramps or injury.
- Creatine should not be used by baseball players 18 years of age or younger because the safety of creatine in this age group is unknown.
- College and professional baseball players who use creatine should stick to the recommended dose of 3 to 5 grams per day, spread throughout the day.

## Top Three Nutrition Tips for Improving Performance

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- 1. Adopt a fluid plan and drink according to a schedule.** Baseball is usually played in hot, humid weather, and it is one of the few sports without a time limit. Drinking enough fluids helps to protect you from cramps and heat illness, and it will improve your performance.
- 2. Fuel up before the game.** If you have a night game, eat your biggest meal of the day at lunch or late afternoon so you won't be starving after the game and be tempted to eat a lot of food late at night.
- 3. Be a food road warrior.** Instead of loading up on fast food or pizza after the game, learn to make healthy choices while eating out. Every restaurant offers healthier

food choices, and you can visit the Web site of your favorite restaurant to learn more about its menu. Eating lots of colorful fruits and vegetables and lots of whole-grain foods will help you meet your vitamin and mineral needs.

### **Tips for Eating on the Road**

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#### **Breakfast**

- Blueberry pancakes, waffles, or french toast with Canadian bacon
- Cooked or ready-to-eat cereal with low-fat milk and fresh fruit
- English muffins, whole grain toast with jam or jelly and peanut butter
- Egg white omelet filled with vegetables and ham
- Fruit smoothie

#### **Lunch**

- Turkey, chicken, or tuna sandwich on pumpernickel bread or stuffed in a whole wheat pita pocket
- Peanut butter and jelly on whole wheat bread
- Regular hamburger or cheeseburger topped with lettuce and tomato
- Baked potato topped with chili
- Grilled or barbecued chicken
- Turkey or chicken sub with peppers
- Grilled chicken salad
- Asian chicken salad

#### **Dinner**

- Vegetable, minestrone, chicken noodle, or bean soup
- House salad with vinaigrette dressing
- Blackened fish, grilled shrimp, baked fish
- Leaner cuts of beef ("round" or "loin" cuts, like ground round or sirloin steak)
- Thick crust pizza with mushrooms, peppers, spinach, or Canadian bacon
- Burritos and soft chicken tacos

#### **Nutrition Prescription:**

\_\_\_\_\_ calories per day  
\_\_\_\_\_ grams of carbohydrate per day  
\_\_\_\_\_ grams of protein per day  
\_\_\_\_\_ grams of fat per day  
\_\_\_\_\_ cups of fluid per day

Special concerns: