

NUTRIZINE

Sport Ireland Institute's Performance Nutrition Newsletter



Welcome Note

Performance Nutrition Team

Welcome to our first Nutrizine edition. It is something that has been on the to-do list for a while, but like a lot of things, we just never got round to actually doing it. That is one thing that we can't say anymore, as COVID-19 is giving us the time to catch-up on lots of these long-fingered lists.

What can you expect in our nutrition newsletter? Well we hope to provide topical nutrition updates, recipe ideas, latest research findings, and how they might impact our daily routines, and a day-in-the-life feature from different athletes every month, telling us what their daily food intake looks like. We are also open to suggestions from you, our readers, for any features you would like to see included, so, if you have any comments or thoughts on what you would like included please do let any of the team know.

Happy Reading!

IN THIS ISSUE

FROM RESEARCH TO REALITY -
LATEST RESEARCH FINDINGS
FROM DANIELLE LOGUE

RECIPE OF THE MONTH FROM
DAVID TOBIN

IMMUNITY AND SHOPPING
TIPS

'DO WE NEED TO RETHINK OUR
CHEAT MEAL, CHEAT DAY OR
BLOW OUT? SHARON MADIGAN

"A DAY IN THE LIFE" - BY
RECENTLY TOKYO QUALIFIED
BRENDAN IRVINE

Tips for athletes during COVID-19

Maintain muscle mass



Stock up on long lasting protein sources: frozen meat/fish, beef jerky, tins of tuna, beans and lentils.

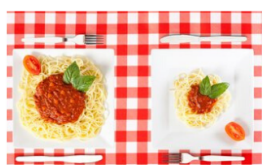


include a protein source in all meals and snacks (20-30g). Remember a casein source of protein pre bed - 250g greek yogurt and fruit.

Minimise fat gain



Stick to your routine to avoid snacking due to boredom.



Adjust portions. Use your training plates as a guide to suitable portion size. Swipe left for athlete training plates.

Support immunity



As well as washing hands and getting adequate sleep, aim to eat the rainbow. Have 1-2 portions at every meal.



If self-isolating, or spending more time indoors, important to supplement with vitamin D.

Looking after our nutrition during COVID-19

Performance Nutrition Team

We all like to follow routines, and this is especially true for our athletes who are used to following structured weekly schedules, with training, meal and meeting times all planned in advance. It is no wonder that some of us are finding it a little difficult to adapt to life at home where for some, boredom, the distraction of other family members, and life of 'virtual' meetings is now the new norm. From a nutrition perspective, there are a few key areas that we can focus on during this time. These are:

- Nutrition to support our immune system
- Top tips on avoiding weight loss / weight gain during reduced training
- Shopping tips during COVID-19

Boredom eating is one area that a few people have specifically asked about. Our key advice for dealing with this is to take yourself out of the kitchen and do something to distract yourself such as going outside for a quick walk, ringing a friend or tidying a section of your wardrobe....whatever it takes! Have a look at Brendan Irvine's solution for his boredom eating on the final page!

In terms of helping to maintain your lean mass during this phase, it is important to have regular sources of protein spread throughout the day in your main meals and snacks.

Panning your meals & snacks the night before can help keep you on track with this one.

Using your What's App group for sharing pictures of meals amongst your teammates can help give new ideas and provide a little extra motivation when needed.



**TRAINING REDUCED?
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR
ATHLETE FOOD INTAKE?**

DON'T ELIMINATE FOODS
KEEP ALL FOOD GROUPS IN YOUR DIET TO AVOID CRAVINGS AND CRASHING. BE SMART: REDUCE PORTIONS AND NUMBER OF SNACKS (SWIPE LEFT FOR PLATE MODEL GUIDES)

PROTEIN AT EACH MEAL
INCLUDE 20-30G OF PROTEIN AT EVERY MEAL TO KEEP YOU FULLER FOR LONGER

FIBRE AT EACH MEAL
INCLUDE WHOLEGRAINS, FRUIT AND VEGETABLES TO MAINTAIN FULLNESS AND FOR A HEALTHY DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

7+ PORTIONS OF FRUIT AND VEG
ADD PLENTY OF COLOUR AND VARIETY TO MEALS TO INCREASE VITAMIN C INTAKE AND SUPPORT IMMUNE FUNCTION

SHOPPING TIPS

1. Wash your hands before and after you go food shopping, and after unpacking your items - see www.safefood.eu for more information
2. Make use of tinned and frozen fruit & vegetables to save you making extra trips to the supermarket.
3. Dried lentils and tinned products such as beans (black, kidney, cannellini, pinto), chickpeas can help bulk up the protein and fibre content of your meals (see recipe section for sample recipe).
4. Use this time to try make your own bread - bread soda & a loaf tin will be essential ingredient for this!



Research - translation from theory to practice

With Danielle Logue

LM: Congratulations on finishing your PhD, tell us a little about your research.

DL: Thanks Laura, glad to be finished at this stage! So, the main focus of my research was on low energy availability risk and its impact of athlete health and performance.

If athletes find themselves in a state of low energy availability, this means that there isn't enough energy leftover within the body for it to function normally after training. For example, female athletes may experience menstrual irregularities due to low energy availability as there isn't enough energy within the body for the reproductive system to function normally. It can occur due to an underlying eating disorder, lack of knowledge on energy needs or it may be due to overtraining.

LM: Is it fair to say that a lot of the research on energy availability has been done on females?

DL: Yes, the majority of research conducted in this area has been with females. Since 2014, there has been more of a focus on males as they can also find themselves in a state of low energy availability which can have a detrimental impact on health and athletic performance. It is just more difficult to identify in males as they don't have a red flag like females such as menstrual irregularities.

LM: In terms of your most recent publication, tell us about this and the findings / how it might impact our male athletes.

DL: Well, testosterone is thought to play a role in erectile function and sexual libido and research in exercising men has shown that those exposed to endurance training may exhibit changes in their reproductive hormones. Males displaying such changes are thought to exhibit the Exercise Hypogonadal Male Condition (EHMC). EHMC is thought to be similar to "absence of menstruation" in females caused by low energy availability. So, as there was a lack of research in males, we wanted to assess risk of EHMC in an Irish athletic male population. Our findings showed that those at risk had a lower than normal sex drive rating within the last month and they had less morning erections per week than those not at risk of EHMC. Risk was also linked to missing 15-21 days of competition or training due to overload injuries. So these findings highlight that identifying males with similar symptoms may be important, especially when considering energy needs, as meeting energy needs is necessary to avoid negative health and performance associated with low energy availability.

LM: And finally, what would be your 1 key piece of advice to athletes based on the findings of your PhD?

DL: My key piece of advice would be to prioritise your nutrition! Not just "eating well", but ensure that you are "eating enough" to support your training and also your body functions. If the body starts to break down, you won't be able to compete or train so doing the basics right and meeting energy needs are essential to avoid being in this situation.



Recipe of the month - Turkey & White Bean Burger

by David Tobin

Prep Time: 20mins - Cook Time: 20mins - Difficulty: Easy Serves: Makes ~8-10 Patties.

Ingredients:

500-600g Turkey mince
1 x 400g can of cannelloni bean, rinsed and drained
1 carrot, grated
1 courgette, grated
1 small onion
1-2 tsp Worcestershire Sauce
Optional: Tabasco Sauce or chilli
1 x egg
½ cup of breadcrumbs
1 tsp of Mixed Herbs
Wholegrain rolls (or Gluten Free alternative)
Hummus
Cheddar Cheese, sliced
1 large avocado

2 tomatoes
Tomato salsa or chutney
2 cups salad greens or spinach

Method:

For the burgers: Put the mince, carrot and courgette in a large bowl.

Mince the beans and onion in a food processor or with a stick blender until finely chopped to a paste – add to meat mix with sauces, egg, breadcrumbs and herbs.

Mix it all together, then make into burger patties (should make around 8-10).

Grill the burger patties until cooked through or cook in oven at 180 C.

Spread the buns with hummus and salsa and add toppings of your choice – e.g. roasted red pepper.

Pop on a slice of cheese and ¼ avocado to each burger.

Serve with some homemade wedges.

WHY I CHOSE THIS RECIPE?.....

- This is a real simple and tasty pattie mix using lean turkey mince as your quality protein source but also makes great use of tinned beans to pack in some extra protein and fibre.
- The veggies in the pattie provide 1 of your 7-a-day too. Top them as you like, my recommendation is adding some roasted red peppers for an extra bit of vitamin C.
- They can form part of your main meal or can be eaten on their own as a snack.

Cheat meal? Cheat Day? Blow out?

Sharon Madigan

In the same way that you won't achieve all your goals in sport after one training session, one meal won't undo all your hard work. However, when these habits become regular, perhaps each week, you might find it harder to reach your performance or physical goals. It isn't so much the food in question but the process and purpose of these meals and what role they play in your athletic development and wellbeing. If you are at a point where you feel you need to blow out for a whole day, then it may be that your relationship with food isn't as healthy as you think it is.

Before you eat something that may not support your training goals, think about why you want to eat it. For example, if you are tired or emotional, or want a pick-me-up in energy, or seeking an escape through food, then you may be eating it for the wrong reason/s. Often people find that this can happen at night. A starting point would be asking yourself, have you eaten enough earlier in the day to fuel your needs? If you haven't you can be hungry, and you will certainly be tired which has a massive effect on your decision making processes.

Here are some factors to consider when trying to align occasional foods to your training goals and nutritional intake.

The occasional "treat" will not destroy your health and performance goals.

The key is to make sure they only make up a minority of your diet, with most of your intake coming from vegetables, fruit, whole grains, lean proteins and nutritious fats.

Social flexibility is good for you.

There is more to becoming a successful athlete than getting stronger, fitter and faster – a life outside of sport is invaluable. Food can connect people. Knowing that you can eat all foods enables you to attend social events without worrying about the food that will be provided. For example, attending your friend or family's birthday party can involve cake if you enjoy it.

Restriction from all "discretionary" food items can encourage a negative relationship with both food and our bodies as it labels certain foods as "good" and others as "bad"

Excessive restriction can leave you more vulnerable to binge eating episodes, which can lead to a vicious cycle of bingeing and restricting that isn't good for either physical or mental health.

Avoid saving yourself for a blow out

Saving yourself for dessert or a blowout can encourage over-eating simply because you have created a window where you have 'allowed' it. Further, it can result in sub-optimal intake of nutrient-dense foods that optimise fuelling and/or recovery. The trick is to maintain a balanced diet with nutritious meals and snacks as per training/competition demands and include small portions of dessert or extras every now and again if you feel like them and/or enjoy them.

Consider the 80:20 rule

80% of the time your diet should include nutrient-dense foods, with 20% of the time allowing for the less nutritious items.

Eat mindfully

Pay close attention to every mouthful you eat to maximise enjoyment of it.

In most cases, consume it away from training and/or competition

Eating a burger and fries directly post training or cakes before training is not going to support optimal performance or recovery. The priority should always be to support training and once the body is satisfied with everything it needs then

have something extra as just that, extra; not to replace the role of healthy food.

SPECIAL ATHLETE FEATURE: THIS MONTH'S 'A DAY-IN-THE-LIFE' IS BOXER BRENDAN IRVINE

Brendan recently captained Team Ireland to the European Boxing Championships in London which ended up being suspended, but Brendan managed to secure his qualification for Tokyo before the suspension.

23 year old Brendan qualified in the 52kg weight-category for what will be his 2nd Olympic Games. We caught up with him recently to ask what his daily nutrition intake is like now that he is back at home.



As Brendan gets his main meals delivered, he is actually finding it ok to just have to prepare breakfast and lunch. Breakfast consists of granola, natural yogurt with fruit & honey. While lunch today was a chicken wrap with peppers, onions, cheese and hot sauce.

Many thanks to Brendan for allowing us into his fridge recently. Brendan admitted that some of his current struggles are consistency of regular meals and trying to avoid boredom snacking - to help prevent this, Brendan has put the following sign up on his fridge!



Brendan's main meal on this day was a Cottage Pie, followed by a cup of tea with a raspberry and white chocolate slice.

If Brendan did have to cook his main meal, his favourite option would be prawns & noodle stir-fry with onions, peppers and chilli flakes, in a sweet chilli dressing, his dessert speciality is a Galaxy Caramel Cheesecake, sounds delicious!

