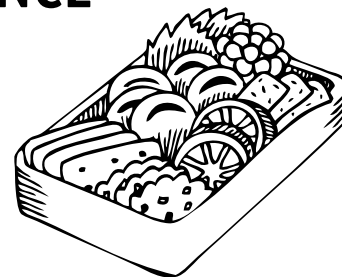


DINING HALL EATING FOR TOP PERFORMANCE

Athletes away from home for camps or competitions, or living in university residences may find healthy eating in a dining hall to be a challenge. The variety of food and relaxed social environment present temptations that can interfere with optimal nutrition. To develop food selection strategies that consistently result in high performance, it is important to first understand the difficulties associated with communal eating.



The Challenges

- Great quantities and an array of food choices make it easy to eat more than needed, potentially compromising athletic performance.
- Not knowing how various dishes are prepared, resulting in uncertainty about hidden fats, nutritional quality, carbohydrate adequacy of meal selections.
- Conversely, unfamiliar foods and dishes cooked in a different manner can reduce appetite resulting in less than optimal fuel intake and unplanned weight loss.
- Eating is a social event and meals taken in relaxed group environments can increase the likelihood of over-consumption.
- Timing of meals: Hot meal stations often close before athletes in some events are able to get to the dining hall.

Tips for High Performance Eating in the Dining Hall

- **Know your nutritional goals and eat according to YOUR PLAN.** The nutritional needs of other athletes may differ from your own, therefore it may not be wise to make the same food choices as your teammates! A Sports Dietitian can help you select the best foods from those available in order to achieve your individual goals. Ask if there is a Sports Dietitian on site or visit www.coach.ca to find a sports dietitian in your area.
- **The menu tells all.** Words such as *fried, crispy, breaded, scampi-style, creamed, buttery, au gratin, and gravy* all suggest high fat content. Better choices are items described as: *steamed, broiled, boiled, charbroiled, poached, marinara, tomato sauce, and "in its own juice"*. (See **Table 1** for top meal choices)
- **Plan your plate.** Make use of menu boards and websites before entering the dining hall so that you can pre-plan your meal. This strategy will prevent over-eating from the array of buffet choices.
- **Relax and eat slowly.** Remove yourself from the dining area when your meal goals are accomplished. Don't be victim to "boredom eating".
- **Source menu nutrition information.** If you are unsure of the foods served, don't be afraid to ask food service staff or the on-site dietitian, if available. Many cafeterias have menu nutrition information posted on websites or nutrition labeling cards.
- **Box it up.** With athletes' hectic training schedules, missing meal times is common. Ask the Food Service Manager to have a boxed meal ready for pick-up either prior to or after activity. Remember food safety! Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.

Bottom Line

By eating a variety of foods from the 4 food groups, you will get the necessary nutrients and energy to perform at your best! **Athletes should focus on boosting carbohydrate intake by consuming additional servings from the grain products and vegetable and fruit groups.**

- **Vegetables and fruit:** supplies vitamins A and C, and carbohydrates
- **Grains products:** supplies foods high in carbohydrates, iron, niacin, thiamine, and fibre
- **Milk and alternatives:** supplies calcium, riboflavin, and protein
- **Meat and alternatives:** supplies protein, thiamine, iron, and zinc



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Table 1
Dining Hall Top Performance Food Choices

FOOD STATION	Choose From These High Performance Foods		Slow Down on these Foods	
Breakfast Station	Waffles with fruit and syrup Bagels/English muffins/ whole grain breads/French toast Hot & cold cereals & granola Pancakes	Baked ham Boiled/poached egg Bread sticks/low fat muffins Fresh/frozen/dried fruit or fruit salad Yogurt Jams/honey/peanut butter	Donuts Bacon Pastries Fried potatoes/ hash browns Fried eggs Sausage	Regular muffins Tea biscuits Breakfast sandwiches with sausage or bacon Croissants Cream cheese Cheese spread
Soup Station	Vegetable soups Lean protein (poultry, beans, lentils) soups made with broth	Chilis Stews	Cream soups Bisques	Macaroni & Cheese
Salad Bar	Dark green/orange and red veggies Chickpeas Cottage cheese Fresh fruit: pineapple, man- darins, strawberries, melon Dried fruit: cranberries, apricots, raisins	Nuts: sunflower seeds, sliced almonds, walnuts Low fat cheeses (e.g. skim mozzarella) Breadsticks/melba toasts/ crackers Light dressing, oil and vinegar Hummus	Olives Croutons Bacon bits	More than 2 tbsp. of dressing High fat cheeses (parmesan, cheddar, feta)
Sandwich Station	Roast beef/lean meat: turkey, chicken, dry tuna Cheese (in moderation)	Whole grain/rye breads rolls, tortillas, pitas, focaccias, paninis	Egg salad with mayo Tuna Salad with mayo Cole slaw with mayo	Macaroni/potato salad Caesar salad
Pizza/Pasta Station	Lower fat pizzas: vegetar- ian; lean meat/chicken; flatbread	Pasta with vegetables (tomato sauces) Whole wheat pasta	High fat pizzas: pepperoni; salami; ground beef; 3 cheese	Meatball Subs Calzones
Hot Food Station	Chicken, fish, lean beef tortillas, pork tenderloin Tofu Red or black beans Rice, pasta/noodles	Chicken/beef fajitas Potatoes/yams Steamed vegetables Bean burrito	Fatty steaks (e.g. T-bone)/prime rib Pork ribs, pork chops	Deep-fried chicken or fish
Sauces	Tomato Ketchup Mustard, honey mustard Barbecue sauce	Light mayo Salsa Tzatziki and pesto (in moderation)	Cheese sauces Cream sauces Mayo-type sauces (e.g. Aioli)	Gravies Alfredo sauce Hollandaise sauce Added butter
The Grill	Veggie burgers Grilled chicken breast on a bun Baked/mashed potato	Baked wedges Lean beef burger Side salad Plain hamburger	Fries Poutine Deli meats Hot dogs	Breaded, fried chicken strips/nuggets Fish patties Chicken wings
Beverages	100% fruit juice Low fat white milk chocolate or smoothie/milk shake	Water Tomato/vegetable juice Sports drinks	Carbonated soft drinks Alcohol	Fruit drinks/punch Energy drinks
Desserts/Snacks	Frozen yogurt Fresh fruit Low fat puddings Applesauce Rice cakes Fig Newtons Fresh/dried fruit	Low fat milk Pretzels Baked tortilla chips Low fat granola Low fat breakfast bars Oatmeal cookies	Pastries Cakes/pies/crisps Regular pudding Ice cream Regular muffins	Cookies Potato chips Chocolate bars Banana chips Corn chips

