**What to eat on Competition Day**

What you eat on match day is crucial to achieving your highest level of performance. Due to the intense nature of wrestling, as well as the variables of making weight and refueling before each match, you must take somewhat of a systematic approach to how and what you eat. This guide will teach you the basics of pre-match nutrition, detailing both what you should and should not be eating.

**After Weigh-ins**

The most important time to fuel your body before a wrestling match is immediately after you have officially weighed in. First, it is likely that you have been dieting rigorously on the days leading up to weigh-ins or, at the very least, have skipped a meal in order to not put yourself over your weight class. In these cases, refueling your body is crucial. Even if you are not cutting weight or dieting, this meal is still important because it will provide you with a foundation of energy to pull from for the rest of the day.

Below you will find various foods that are good to eat up to two hours before a match. These foods are generally high in complex and simple [carbohydrate](http://wrestling.isport.com/wrestling-guides/wrestling-glossary/?key=1811), with added proteins and [fat](http://wrestling.isport.com/wrestling-guides/wrestling-glossary/?key=6010) to help you maintain you energy levels throughout the day.

* Salads including fruits, pasta, veggies, nuts, etc.
* Sandwiches; turkey, chicken, and peanut butter are best
* Baked or grilled chicken breast with rice and veggies
* Pasta with tomato sauce
* Oatmeal with fruit
* Yogurt with granola and fruit
* Eggs and wheat toast

Hot Tip: Acids & Dairy

Most wrestlers stay away from acidic foods (mostly citrus fruits and spicy foods) and dairy (milk, cheese, etc.) on match day. These foods can cause nausea and may hinder your performance. Be cautious when eating these foods and try to keep them to a minimum.

**Before & Between Matches**

You must also be careful of what you eat and drink *right before* a wrestling match. You should eat at least 45 minutes before your match, and keep the food light — it’s best to snack throughout a long meet rather than eat big meals. Don’t eat 30 minutes prior to a match. You essentially want to compete ***hungry*,** or with as close to an empty stomach as possible.

Below are some foods that you can mix, match, and combine between matches:

* **Fruits**: Fruits like bananas and oranges have high sugar contents, so eating one of these should give you a good spike of energy. Generally speaking, you can’t go wrong with fruit.
* **Light sandwiches**: Peanut butter and jelly or honey is a battle-tested, pre-match wrestling meal. Turkey and chicken are other good choices to eat right before a match. Go easy on the condiments (if at all), but add extra veggies!
* **Water**: The most underrated part of your pre-match meal is plain, old water! Water will help you digest your food quicker and more efficiently. It will also hydrate you and allow you to regulate your core body temperature. Water should be your first choice over sports drinks.
* **Energy bars**: A half or whole energy bar is a calorie- and nutrient-dense food that won’t fill you up. Try to choose an energy bar that has natural ingredients and limits preservatives and artificial ingredients. Generally speaking, energy bars containing nuts or nut butters, fruits, grains, etc. are your best bet. Also, make sure to drink *at least* 12 ounces of water per bar consumed to aid digestion.
* **Sports drinks**: Sports drinks are okay for competition, but you want to limit the amount you have. Essentially, you don’t need sports drinks if you are getting the necessary nutrients from your food. However, sports drinks are a helpful way to boost your electrolyte intake. Mixing half of a bottle of a sports drink with half of a bottle of water will help replenish your electrolytes without overloading you with syrups and additives. It will taste good, too!

Hot Tip: Spread It Out

* Again, it’s best to eat a little bit at a time so you don’t overload yourself. Try combining these foods to have small, mini-meals between matches. An example of a solid mini-meal is half of a sandwich, a piece of fruit, and a water/sports drink mix.