NUTRITION FOR TRAVELING ATHLETES

Traveling away from home for training and competition is standard practice for most elite and recreational athletes. Unfortunately, the disruptions and distractions of a new environment, changes in schedule and exposure to different foods can significantly affect usual eating habits. Some nutritional challenges faced by athletes while traveling include:

- Achieving carbohydrate and protein requirements
- Meeting daily vitamin and mineral requirements
- Balancing energy intake
- Maintaining adequate hydration

Good preparation and a travel eating plan that matches nutritional goals to food availability will help you arrive at your destination in the best shape possible.

TRAVELING BY AIR

The risk of becoming dehydrated on long flights is high as the pressurized cabins cause increased fluid losses from the skin and lungs. It is inadequate to rely on cabin service for fluid as the serve sizes of drinks is very small. Athletes should take their own supply of bottled water onto the flight to supplement the water, juice and soft drink provided in the air. **Aim to drink approximately 1 cup per hour during the flight.**

It is advisable to pack extra snacks in carry-on luggage. Food available for sale at airports tends to be expensive and it can be difficult to find nutritious options. It is always useful to have some supplies in case of unexpected delays.

TRAVELING BY VEHICLE

*When you travel away from home you need to be more organized. Here are some ideas for when you are traveling, and when you reach your destination:*

**BREAKFAST**

- Oatmeal or cream of wheat with banana, low-fat milk, water
- Scrambled or hard-cooked eggs, with whole wheat toast, jam or honey, cup of 100% juice or water
- Pancakes or French toast with fresh fruit of your choice, low-fat milk, water
- Granola or cold cereal with an orange, low-fat milk, water
- Bagel with cream cheese or peanut butter, and low-fat yogurt + piece of fruit
LUNCH AND DINNER

- Pasta with marinara + meat, poultry, or lean pork
- Chicken or fish with rice or baked potatoes and steamed veggies
- Soup and garden salad with breadstick or roll and protein of choice
- Soup and sandwich with oatmeal raisin cookie for dessert
- Steak or chicken breast, baked potato, and garden salad
- Broth-based soup, meat lasagna, and salad

SNACKS AND TRAVEL PACKS

Snacks and travel packs are foods that you can pack and bring along or buy at travel destinations:

- Fruit (fresh, dried, applesauce, juice)
- Low-fat yogurt, low-fat milk, chocolate milk, low-fat cottage cheese (these need refrigeration)
- Cookies (Fig Newton’s, animal crackers, honey grahams, etc.)
- PB&J sandwich
- Trail mix—make your own, or purchase a large bag at Costco/Sam’s Club: almonds or other favorite nuts, dried cranberries and/or raisins, sunflower seeds, cereal, pretzels, bagel chips, mini teddy grahams, goldfish crackers, etc.
- Sport foods (bars, drinks)
- Orange juice (needs refrigeration) and pretzels
- Granola bars (Kashi, Nature Valley, Quaker)
- Whole grain crackers, rice cakes, popcorn
- Individual instant oatmeal packs (will need access to hot water to “cook”)

**NOTE** Make sure to stay hydrated while away from home! Pack an extra water bottle and keep one with you on the bus, plane, etc. Seeing it will help you remember to drink water.