

Just like a car, your body needs fuel in the tank to perform your best. A swimmer's nutrition is vital to their success in the pool. Here are some simple and easy nutrition tips to keep in mind at a meet or when you're training during the season.

Swimming fuel

- **Keep it complex:** Eating foods that are complex carbohydrates are a great thing to eat leading up to your big event. These can be found in whole grain foods like whole wheat pasta, whole wheat bread, and even whole wheat cereal. Complex carbohydrates are what's best at fueling your body for big events like a swim meet.
- **No sweet stuff:** Try and stay away from refined sugars if you're getting ready for a meet. These foods include items like candy, soda and anything that might have "white" sugar in it. These are typically bad for you, even outside of training, because your body treats sugar as a way to add fat to your body.
- **Long and lean:** Adding items like lean meats to your diet is also very important. Your body uses these as fuel and absorbs the protein that's in it. Items like lean turkey, chicken breast and beans are a great source of these proteins.

Meet mentality

- **Dinner the night before:** For dinner, eat a meal with a simple grilled chicken breast and a side of steamed vegetables. Your body will love this and take it as fuel that only supports the muscles that you'll be using for swimming.
- **Breakfast that morning:** Keep things light, but never skip breakfast. Your body will need the nutrients that you'll be burning later. A bowl of oatmeal and fruit or hard boiled eggs work perfectly to get your energy levels going.
- **At the meet:** Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of water and snack on a power bar if you're feeling hungry.

Training montage

- **Gearing up:** Make sure that throughout the season you're always fueling yourself with carbohydrates. Your body uses carbs as its main source for energy so by eating these on a regular basis your body will start to recognize the food that's coming in as fuel.
- **Keep it clean:** Whenever you're eating, try and stay away from processed foods. These include items like chips and foods that have high fructose corn syrup. Your body has a harder time breaking these down and it can hinder your ability to focus when in the water.
- **Go halvesies:** When eating, make sure that your plate is at least half fruits and vegetables. This will help give your body the vitamins and minerals it needs in addition to the fuel it needs to power you through the day. As with any sport training or regimen, as long as you're balancing what you eat then you'll be more and more prepared for practice as well as a competition. Just remember: food is fuel. While you can indulge every once in a while, it's best to stay healthy and you'll notice a huge difference when it comes to how you perform in the water.

Adapted from <https://www.swimoutlet.com/guides/swim-nutrition-tips>