

Milk for sports people

Besides the many reasons why milk is healthy for all of us, milk is also good for you if you like to practise sport.

Active people need a number of components in their daily diet, in order to maintain their bodies and keep fit. The general guidelines that all athletes should follow, are to limit fat intake, use less refined carbohydrates (such as white bread and sugar) and to include dairy in their diet.

Dairy can fulfil a number of functions in a sports diet:

- **Calcium:** Calcium deficiency is common among athletes. Milk and milk products are the best source of calcium. Other sources of calcium include oily fish such as sardines, as well as dark, leafy vegetables.
- **Fat:** Dairy products are a great source of fat. Especially low-fat products such as cottage cheese, yoghurt and milk should be included in the athlete's diet, as it supplies good quality proteins and not too much fat.
- **Fluids:** Fluids are one of the most important aspects of an athlete's diet. During exercise, the body loses vast amounts of salts (natrium) and moisture. This can lead to dehydration and cramps. Milk is a very good alternative to commercial sports drinks. It contains carbohydrates and electrolytes, which are needed to replenish your body if fluids and salt are lost.

Athletes often do not have much time for cooking. Dairy is the ideal food, as it requires little or no preparation. Here is a good example of how you can include dairy in your sports diet:

- **Breakfast:** Enjoy a glass of milk on its own or in some oats porridge. Also have some toast with butter and a glass of unsweetened orange juice.
- **Midmorning snack:** 175 ml tub of fruit yoghurt.
- **Lunch:** Enjoy a wholewheat sandwich with butter, salads and cold meat, and top it off with some fruit yoghurt or a glass of milk.
- **Dinner:** Make soup creamier by adding a cup of milk to it. Enjoy some grilled meat with steamed vegetables and a jacket potato with grated cheese or plain yoghurt instead of cream.
- **Evening snack:** Make yourself a malted drink such as Milo or Horlicks with low-fat or skimmed milk.

The golden rule for athletes is to include four portions of dairy in their daily diet, for example 250 ml of milk, 30 grams of cheddar cheese, 2 tubs of yoghurt (or switch one tub of yoghurt for a glass of milk). 