



11/26

Winter Athlete Fueling Guide

A comprehensive resource for athletes in winter sports.

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Why Fueling Matters

Essential Nutrition for Winter Athletes

Fueling properly during winter sports is crucial for maintaining energy and enhancing performance. Adequate nutrition supports **muscle recovery** and boosts the immune system, vital during cold weather training.

Athletes should prioritize **pre-practice fueling** with balanced meals rich in carbohydrates and healthy fats. This preparation ensures optimal energy levels for peak performance during winter activities and helps prevent fatigue.

10 Pre-Practice Fuel Ideas for Winter Athletes



150–300 calories • quick digesting (carbohydrates + fats + small amount of protein)

1. Banana + Granola Bar
2. Half PB&J Sandwich
3. Applesauce Pouch + Pretzels
4. Hot Oatmeal Cup + Honey
5. Yogurt Cup + Berries
6. Chocolate Milk (8–12 oz)
7. Bagel Half + Small Amount of Cream Cheese or Jam
8. Sports Drink + Fig Bars
9. Crackers + String Cheese
10. Rice Cake + Banana Slices + Small Honey Drizzle

Hydration Checklist

Essential Tips for Winter Athletes



Athletes should drink at LEAST half their body weight in oz of water daily, plus extra on practice and game days.

ex: a 140lb athlete should drink 70 oz per day

Athletes should aim for plain water during the day, and switch to electrolytes just before and after practice.

If athletes do not like the taste of water, they can add lemon, cucumber, mint or berries to their plain water intake.

Staying **hydrated** is crucial for winter athletes. Cold weather can mask thirst, leading to dehydration. Regular water intake enhances performance and aids recovery, ensuring athletes maintain optimal energy levels during training and competition.

Establishing a hydration routine is essential. Athletes should aim for consistent fluid intake before, during, and after practice. Incorporating electrolyte-rich drinks can further help in replenishing lost minerals, supporting overall health and endurance in colder climates.

Essential Recovery Strategies

The Importance of Proper Post-Practice Nutrition

Post-practice recovery is crucial for athletes to **restore energy** and repair muscles after winter training sessions. Prioritizing nutrition and hydration helps enhance performance and **prevent injuries**.

Incorporating nutrient-rich foods and adequate fluids into recovery routines ensures athletes stay **optimally fueled**. Consuming a balanced meal within 30 minutes post-practice maximizes recovery and prepares them for their next session.

10 Post-Practice Fuel Ideas for Winter Athletes

1. Chocolate Milk + Banana
2. Turkey or Chicken Wrap
3. Greek Yogurt Parfait
4. Warm Rice Bowl
5. Egg & Cheese Breakfast Sandwich
6. Smoothie (Winter Version)
7. Soup + Sandwich Combo
8. Burrito or Burrito Bowl
9. Oatmeal Bowl With Protein
10. Cottage Cheese + Fruit + Crackers



How Much Does Your Athlete Need?

Most athletes burn between 2300-4500 calories PER DAY

Why 2,400–3,500 Calories Matter More in the Winter
Winter is one of the easiest times for athletes to accidentally under-eat. Cold weather suppresses appetite, school schedules get busy, and heavy training loads continue, but your body actually needs more fuel, not less.

Athletes Need Fuel for Growth, Hormones & Strength. High school athletes are STILL growing.



When they under-fuel, they risk:

- Hormone disruption
- Irregular menstrual cycles in girls
- Low testosterone in boys
- Loss of speed and power
- Overuse injuries
- Frequent illness
- Stress fractures

SAMPLE FUELING PLANS FOR WINTER ATHLETES
These are examples — actual needs vary by sport, training load, and athlete size.

▶️ 2,400 CALORIE DAY (Smaller athletes, moderate training)

Breakfast (500–550 cal)

- 2 eggs
- 1 cup oatmeal + honey
- Banana
- 1 cup Greek yogurt

Lunch (650–700 cal)

- Turkey sandwich (whole wheat)
- Pretzels
- Fruit cup
- Yogurt cup

Pre-Practice Snack (200–250 cal)

- Banana + granola bar

Post-Practice Fuel (350–400 cal)

- Chocolate milk
- PB&J half sandwich

Dinner (650–700 cal)

- 6 oz chicken
- 1–1.5 cups rice
- Cooked veggies
- Bread roll



Need a Nutrition Consultation? Contact Coach Jo

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