

Performance Point

Nutrition for Travel

by Susan Boegman, Nutritionist, PacificSport

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Traveling for training and competition is a standard practice for high performance athletes every month of the year. Leaving home can create havoc with your nutrition, as typical eating patterns can be difficult to maintain. Although the list of nutrition challenges during travel is lengthy, today's performance point will focus on: **advance planning, meeting nutritional needs, and access to adequate or familiar food.**

Plan ahead

To successfully navigate eating on the road you must first do your homework! Three important questions to consider are:

1. How and where will you be eating en route to your destination?
2. What is the food supply like at your destination; will the foods you require, or are familiar with, be available?
3. Where will you be eating: restaurants, self-catering, hotel catering, athlete dining halls?

Often times information can be obtained through the competition organizers, the internet, travel agencies, experienced athletes who have been there before, and in many cases the PacificSport dietitian.

Organize catering ahead of time

As much as possible plan where, when and generally what you will be eating. Where you can, discuss in advance the proposed menus with airlines, restaurants, athlete dining hall or hotel catering staff or host families. For self catering bring your own utensils, can opener, hot plate and power cord adapter.

High quality foods

To ensure you meet your nutritional needs for **high quality** carbohydrates, proteins and fats, plan to eat according to your *nutritional training program*. Focus meals on whole grains, lean proteins, nuts/seeds and their butters or oils, as well as lots of vegetables and fruits. This can be a challenge when traveling, so for a comprehensive list of foods to both eat and avoid, follow the link to http://www.pacificsport.com/images/pdfs/PacificSport_Nutrition-Travel_Supplement_2006_06_28.pdf. If you are unsure how to choose good quality foods on the road or you do not have a nutritional training program consult a sport dietitian prior to traveling.

Once you have researched where you will be eating and the types of foods you will have access to, you may decide to bring along a supplemental food supply. Sport or vegetable/fruit bars, trail mixes, cheese sticks, peanut butter, powdered meal replacements, powdered sport drink mixes, cans of tuna, salmon and baked beans are all good choices. Given the potential weight of food supplies consider dividing the extra food among team members or send it ahead. Also, try to identify new foods from your destination country that will meet your need for quality protein, fat and carbohydrate. For example: refried beans, chicken, rice, salsa, avocado and corn tortillas in Mexico.

At the end of your trip, complete a review noting any problems and successes and use this to improve your future experiences. At home you train and eat to win! Advance preparation, knowledge and creativity will help you win on the road too!

"I've learned from past experiences that taking care of your nutrition during travel is crucial to a great performance. When traveling for competitions, there is no room for poor nutrition and I recommend bringing your favourite non-perishable along with you. My carry-on bag is now always filled with food."

Kirsten Sweetland, National Triathlon Centre



The Dining Hall at the Athens 2004 Olympic Summer Games.

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