



Fueling Rowers

Fueling Your Sport

- The number of calories needed by rowers depends on the intensity of training. Recreational rowers need fewer calories than competitive rowers.
- When training is very intense and lasts a long time, rowers can need 20.5 to 21.5 calories per pound of body weight per day (45 to 47 calories/kg/day). Male heavyweight rowers may need more than 6,000 calories per day, and female heavyweight rowers need at least 3,000 calories each day.
- When rowers improve their stroke, they don't use as much energy. Therefore, they may need to eat fewer calories than they did when they were beginners.
- Carbohydrate is the most important fuel for rowers, but some rowers don't get enough. You need 2.3 to 3.2 grams of carbohydrate per pound of body weight per day (5 to 7 g/kg/day) during training and competition. During training, you should aim for the higher end of the range (3.2 grams/pound/day). Good sources of carbohydrate include whole grain breads and cereals, fruits, and vegetables.
- Rowers need 0.55 to 0.8 grams of protein per pound of body weight per day (1.2 to 1.7 g/kg/day). You need the most protein during the early phases of training. Good sources of protein include fish, chicken, turkey, beef, low-fat milk, cheese, yogurt, eggs, nuts, and soy.
- Eat about 0.45 grams of fat per pound of body weight per day (1 g/kg/day). Choose heart-healthy fats, such as canola oil, olive oil, and nuts.

Fluid Needs

- When you compete in a weight class, you may think about using dehydration practices to make weight at the last minute. However, practices such as working out in a rubber suit in a sauna, limiting fluids, vomiting, and taking diuretics are very dangerous. They can lead to serious health problems or diminish your performance.
- Try to make weight well before the start of the competitive season. To get to a competitive weight, focus on eating less, not fluid restriction.
- Two hours before every workout and competition, drink 2 cups of fluids.
- Drink about 3 cups of fluid for each pound lost during training or competition.
- One way to know if you are drinking enough is to monitor your urine color. Urine will have a pale, straw color when you are hydrated.
- Use sport drinks to get fluids, carbohydrates, and electrolytes that your body loses when you're active.

Supplements Commonly Used by Rowers

- Creatine may increase performance in 1,000-meter rowing events.
- Creatine supplementation may also help you recover more quickly from weight training sessions, which could help you train harder.
- Creatine monohydrate powder is a common type of creatine supplement. The recommended dose is 3 to 5 grams per day. Taking larger amounts does not give you added benefits.

- Creatine is not recommended for athletes younger than 18 years because it is not known whether creatine is safe for this age group.
- Energy bars are a convenient way to get more calories and nutrients. Choose an energy bar that contains more carbohydrate than protein or fat. Many energy bars do not taste very good, so find a bar you like to eat. Bars are more expensive than other food, and they don't contain any magical ingredients to improve performance.

Top Three Nutrition Tips to Improve Performance

- 1. Manage your weight in the off-season instead of cutting weight in-season.** A sports dietitian can create an eating plan that allows you to make your desired weight well before the season starts. Some athletes have unrealistic goals for body composition. A sports dietitian can help you determine whether your goals are realistic.
- 2. Develop a hydration plan along with your training plan.** Dehydration hurts performance and increases the risk for heat illness. Choose sport drinks when rowing on hot, humid days. Drink 2 cups of fluid 2 hours before exercise and drink plenty of fluids after your workout.

3. If you want to gain weight, plan ahead.

Heavyweight rowers often want to gain weight in a short time period, but healthy weight gain, like weight loss, will not happen in a day or two. If you want to gain weight, increase your calories by 500 to 700 per day. If you use high-calorie and high-protein liquid meals, use them between meals or before bed for best results.

Nutrition Prescription:

_____ calories per day
 _____ grams of carbohydrate per day
 _____ grams of protein per day
 _____ grams of fat per day
 _____ cups of fluid per day

Special concerns: