



Wrestler Nutrition Tips

A wrestler's diet has a profound impact on overall performance. Proper nutrition helps a wrestler feel strong both physically and mentally. The wrong diet can leave a wrestler feeling weak, dehydrated, and unproductive in their training. The wrestling season is a marathon, not a sprint! What you do now will impact how you are able to perform at the end of the season. Successful wrestlers know that good nutrition is an essential component of their daily training ritual. They realize that good eating habits help them compete at a much higher level. **A WRESTLER WHO MAINTAINS HIS WEIGHT WITH AN EFFECTIVE NUTRITIONAL PLAN IS 30% STRONGER AT THE END OF THE SEASON COMPARED TO A WRESTLER WHO DID NOT MANAGE HIS WEIGHT**

Stay Hydrated: **WATER** is a very important part of your daily diet and is necessary for optimal performance. Try to consume one liter of water for every thousand calories of food consumed per day. Sport drinks are also a great way to replenish nutrients lost from practices and competition. It is not a good idea to totally deprive your body of water when trying to make weight. It is best to consume a few ounces of water every two to three hours while you are in the process of cutting down to make weight.

Eat Frequent Meals in Small Portions This is recommended especially if you are trying to drop down to a lower weight class. By eating smaller portions, your metabolism speeds up and more calories are burned off. This method will also help to stabilize blood sugar levels and provide a more steady supply of nutrition throughout the day. It is recommended that you eat from several different food groups so that you receive a large variety of nutrients. Eating frequent meals in smaller portions is a much better way for a wrestler to lose weight as compared to just starving yourself.

Eat Vegetables: It is important for wrestlers to eat a steady supply of vegetables every day. Vegetables contain several important vitamins and minerals that are necessary for good health. They are also generally free of fat and high in fiber. Eating vegetables is a good way for you to fill up, but not feel fat. They also contain antioxidants which help the body fight off disease and illnesses.

Complex Carbohydrates: 60% of your diet should be from Complex Carbs. Complex carbohydrates are a great source of energy. They are found in healthy foods such as fruit, whole grains, and vegetables. It generally takes longer for your body to digest complex carbohydrates than simple carbohydrates such as refined or processed foods. Since it takes longer to digest complex carbohydrates, you feel fuller longer and do not need to eat as much. Complex carbohydrates supply a steady stream of energy with a limited amount of fat. Some other examples of complex carbohydrates are oatmeal, brown rice, baked potatoes, and whole grain cereals.

Protein is a Must: Strive for 20% of your calories from protein in your diet Protein is essential for the formation of healthy muscles, bones, blood, and skin cells. Unfortunately, it is not stored in the body. So it is necessary to get a steady dose of protein every day. Some of the best sources of dietary protein are fish, whole grains, beans, nuts, lean poultry, and red meat. It is important to remember that plant foods such as legumes or soy supply as much protein as meats.

Fats are Essential: 20% of your calories should be good fats. You need fats to have your body systems work properly. But you need unsaturated fats, not saturated fats. My two favorites are olive oil, and flax seed oil.

After making weight eat foods that will help recover and won't adversely affect performance. Foods with fat are definitely slower digesting. Carbohydrates can be easier on a wrestler's stomach. Foods like: applesauce, crackers, and cereal can be easily digested and aid in recovery. After making weight don't let a lapse in judgment effect your performance, plan ahead and shoot for smaller portions spread throughout the tournament day.

Ways to speed up your metabolism to burn more calories:

☼ **Always eat-breakfast**, Skipping breakfast sends the message to your body that you're starving because you haven't had food in since maybe 8 o'clock the night before; As a protective measure, your metabolism slows down. Food fuels your metabolism and will boost it for the day.

☼ **Eat earlier in the day.** Research has demonstrated that you can lose weight and boost your metabolism simply by eating a substantial breakfast and lunch and a light dinner.

☼ **Dinner should be eaten as early as possible**, preferably at least 4 hours before bedtime.

☼ **Never eat less than 1,200 calories a day.** Fewer calories are usually not enough to support your base metabolism, so your metabolism slows down.

☼ **Snack frequently.** Choose fruits and vegetables for snacks and boost you fat burning capability Also, snacking prevents you from becoming too hungry. The hungrier you are, the less control you have over what-and how much you eat.

☼ **Eat food in its simplest form.** The less processed food is; the fewer calories it will have and less of the calories come from fat.

☼ **Do some type of aerobic exercise first thing in the morning.**