

“Juicing” the Right Way for Athletes

When we talk to athletes about juicing the first thing we explain is this is not steroids. Juicing is a quick and healthy way to get the most nutrients from vegetables and fruits and can be a quick pick me up for training. Juicing is beneficial for all athletes - and this is your guide on what's best for improved stamina, building muscle or recharging your batteries

There's a common myth out there that you should refrain from eating before working out. This notion stems from the belief that your body will tap into its fat reserves if there is no fuel available to burn first. Although this can be the case, the truth is that your body needs fuel to provide energy for your workout – weather it be cardio or weightlifting. Juicing and blending the right foods can be a quick and easy way to get the right, energy boosting, fuel that your body needs for an effective workout.

There are numerous types of foods that can be juiced or blended. Foods with carbohydrates provide some of the best energy producing fuel for pre-workout as they provide glucose. Specifically, complex carbs are best as they take longer to convert to glucose and thus provide a more consistent energy supply to your muscles as you workout. Complex carbs are also better for your body as they're typically found in foods that are loaded with vitamins, minerals and nutrients. Fruits, vegetables and grains are good sources of complex carbs.

Your body takes about five hours to digest fat, three hours for protein and about two hours for carbohydrates. For this reason if your workout is a few hours away your meal should consist of a combination of low fat, high carb foods with moderate protein. If your workout is about 90 minutes away have a snack to energize. This is where juicing comes in. Health drinks can be prepared quickly and easily and can be a great source of complex carbohydrates, protein as well as vital minerals, vitamins and nutrients.

The following recipes and their descriptions are extracted from the book Power Juices Super Drinks, by Steve Meyerowitz. They provide some great examples of health drinks that will boost your bodies' energy for a more effective workout.

Battery Recharge 8 oz Carrot Juice

1 clove Garlic, juiced
1 tsp Ginseng Powder

Here is a quick pick me-up that provides long term energy and is easy to make. Carrot juice is a great source of beta-carotene, the famous antioxidant that protects against the damaging effects of exercise and increases oxygen in the blood, tissues, and brain. Ginseng is renown for providing strength and energy, and garlic, among its many other benefits, increases stamina.

Juice the carrots and garlic and stir in the ginseng powder or granules. Ginseng is available at health and oriental food stores. Use organic carrots for the best tasting juice.

Stamina & Endurance

1 Cup Apple Juice
1 Banana
2 Tbsp Oat, Rice, or Wheat Bran
1 Tbsp Spirulina, Chlorella, or Blue-Green Algae
8 – 12 Almonds
To Taste Pure Water

Banana and spirulina are good sources of potassium, important for the conversion of glucose to glycogen for energy. Magnesium (from bran, almonds, and spirulina) is important for the storage and release of glycogen. Almonds are also a high energy food, producing 6 calories per gram. Adequate levels of chromium (from bran and banana) and zinc (from spirulina) help balance blood sugar regulation and therefore energy production.

Blend the banana and the bran in the juice until smooth. Add the spirulina or other algae powder. For best digestion, almonds should be softened by pre-soaking them for several hours. If you like a crunchy, chewy drink, add the almonds at the end and just chop or blend them briefly.

Muscle Milk

1 cup Oats or Soy Milk
1 tsp Whey Protein Powder
1 Tbsp Cocoa Powder
1 tsp Honey

Oats provide a rich source of carbohydrates that are easily converted into energy. Oats increase stamina and are particularly fortifying for the heart muscle. Oat milk is available in health food stores, or you can make your own. Or you may substitute soy milk. The calcium contained in cocoa acts as a muscle tonic and helps with muscular contraction. Whey protein is the richest dietary source of BCAA's, a form of amino acids that builds muscle mass. Whey protein prevents muscle loss and promotes muscle growth and repair. Honey provides glucose, a source of energy.

Serve hot or cold. If drinking hot, stir the cocoa powder and whey into the hot milk. Heat up to, but do not boil. If drinking cold, shake or blend the powders and honey thoroughly into the milk.

Tips to Successful Juicing

There are loads of other healthy fruits, vegetables and grains that can be juiced and blended to benefit your body for pre and post workouts. Consider the following tips when using your juicer or blender.

Always remove the peel from citrus fruits before juicing them. The peels from oranges, tangerines and grapefruits contain oils that are indigestible and provide a bitter taste. If consumed in large quantities citrus peels can lead to digestive problems. Lemon and

lime peels can be juiced, but if consuming them, make sure they're organic to avoid pesticides. The white portion of a citrus fruit is actually the most beneficial part as it contains the most Vitamin C and bioflavonoids (an antioxidant).

Don't forget to wash your produce and remove any bruised portions. 'Remove large pits and hard seeds from fruits such as peaches, plums and cherries. Smaller and softer seeds, like those found in watermelons and grapes, can be juiced as they include beneficial nutrients.

**Remember to

1. Always plan ahead for what you are going to eat
2. Obtain adequate amounts of protein
3. Work on Flexibility
4. Supplement your diet with a fish oil and multi-vitamin

Let me know if I can help. Email me at architectsports@gmail.com

God Bless,

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