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Alternative Sports Nutrition Methods Worth A Second Look

Essential Oil For Sports Nutrition: The Supplements

Fat; people on a strict diet are afraid of this word. As much as possible, they will avoid any food that will increase fat in their diet. In fact, if you will look at their refrigerator, all you will see are food with less fat, and sometimes, even zero fat.

Despite all the concern of dieters about having fat in diet, our body needs healthy oils and fats to function properly. Athletes most especially, need essential oil for sports nutrition. These essential oils can be compared to all-purpose machine oil that lubricates stuck and rusting metal hinges, screws and other moveable parts of a machine.

The only problem to most people, they get the wrong kinds of fats. They lack the good, healthy fats and essential oils for sports nutrition.

Fats carry fat-soluble vitamins such as vitamins A, D, E and K from the food we eat to our body.

These essential oils for sports nutrition are good for athletes who need to be in tip-top shape all the time. These life giving oils are one of the best sources of energy and help in the production of new and healthy cell membranes and other hormone-like compounds, the icosanoids. These amazing compounds help the body in regulating heart rate, blood pressure, constriction of blood vessel and clotting, and even the nervous system.

Essential oils for sports nutrition

So, what are the essential oils for sports nutrition?

1. Flaxseed oil, essential oil for sports nutrition.

Our body can't function well without the two important polyunsaturated fats: the linoleic and the alpha-linoleic acid.

Flaxseed oil is therefore one of the essential oils for sports nutrition. Flaxseed oil is rich in linoleic and alpha-linoleic acids that help in maintaining good bodily functions and normal cell structure. Also, flaxseed oil is useful for people with autoimmune diseases.

2. Cod liver oil, a fish essential oil for sports nutrition.

Cod liver oil is rich in Vitamin A and D. This two-in-one essential oil is on the list of athletes' favorite essential oil for sports nutrition.

Cod liver oil releases large amount of Vitamin A that help athletes maintain clear eyesight.

Athletes can get vitamin D from sunlight. But because of the harmful effects of ultraviolet rays found in sunlight, the only available time for athletes to sunbathe and get vitamin D is during the early mornings till 9 am only. After that, physicians don't advise athletes to expose themselves from the harmful rays of sunlight.

So, to get the proper amount of vitamin D in their bodies, physicians prescribe cod liver oil as a supplement to athletes. Vitamin D regulates calcium metabolism in the body. Vitamin D is so important to calcium that there will be loss of calcium if vitamin D is lacking in the body.

During a game, even if an athlete is fully hydrated he may suffer from weak muscles and listlessness if he lacks calcium. So to properly store and metabolize calcium in the body, athlete needs vitamin D. He can get large doses of vitamin D from cod liver oil, a fish essential oil for sports nutrition.

3. Omega 3, a fish essential oil for sports nutrition

A can of tuna or the fatty parts of a fish such as the belly and the head contain omega 3, a fatty oil that is good for the heart. Omega 3 helps the heart to pump well and clears the arteries of bad cholesterol.

Omega 3 is a fish essential oil for sports nutrition. With omega 3, an athlete's heart is ready for long hours of strenuous activities. Omega 3 also helps in reducing heart rate; thus the heart releases enough oxygen to the brain and other organs. An athlete is less tired and weak if his heart pumps slower even when his body is at work.

Any athlete who would want to take these oils as supplement should consult their physicians first. There are overdoses with these oils if taken in large quantities since they are fat-soluble; the extra doses are not excreted through urine or feces.

Heat Stroke Prevention: An Important Factor in Japanese Sports Nutrition

The continuing development of sports nutrition is not only rampant in the United States but also in other parts of the world. Sports nutrition in also of great importance is Japan.

Here are some developments related to Japanese sports nutrition, specifically on heat stroke prevention, from the web site of Otsuka Pharmaceutical.

1. Pocari Sweat Junior Sports Clinic

The Japan Amateur Sports Association hosted the said sports clinic for the promotion of sports nutrition to children in the country. The sports clinic was held in 11 venues, and Otsuka invited star athletes as guest instructors. Seminars are provided for the attendees, with topics such as the importance of fluid intake and ways for the prevention of heat stroke.

2. Detective Konan on heat stroke

Japanese children were in for a special treat when the Japanese Association of School health delivered educational videos to elementary schools featuring popular cartoon character Detective Konan.

In the video, Konan discusses ways to prevent the occurrence of heat stroke. Posters related to the topic were also given out to the schools. The Konan videos have been utilized as instructional material for Japanese sports nutrition around campuses, particularly on guidance and health activities.

3. National Junior High School General Athletics Meet

The sporting event, which was geared towards junior high students, was celebrated in Hokkaido under the sponsorship of the Nippon Junior High School Physical Culture Association together with other organizations.

Otsuka took advantage of the gathering to promote the significance of heat stroke prevention. Electrolyte beverages were given out to attendees so that they could play sports under the hot weather.

4. Otsuka Academy Public School Seminar

With the goal of spreading our information about the importance of Japanese sports nutrition, the Otsuka Academy Public School Seminar opened for elementary and junior high pupils.

Topics included are the latest news on dietary and nutrition habits, and the state of the body during growth spurts. Pamphlets and videos were used by specialists to promote the significance of fluid retention during strenuous activities. The activity aroused encouraging reaction from the subjects.

5. Strategies to Prevent Heat Stroke in Daily Life

Otsuka produced a video with that title to educate people working in extremely hot surroundings regarding the prevention of heat stroke.

The video was edited by the Japan Industrial Safety and Health Association, and was given out to businesses all over the country. The video expounds on the importance of daily hydration, and the right amount of periods to be given to employees for exercise, rest and work. Several events have already featured the video, including the evening seminars held by the Japan Society for Occupational Health.

6. Heat Stroke Prevention Research Team

Otsuka Pharmaceuticals is providing support for the activities of the said research effort of the Japan Amateur Sports Association to heighten the level of people's awareness on the hazards on heat stroke and how to prevent it while engaging in sports or other strenuous activities.

The Otsuka Saga Nutraceuticals Research Institute is an enthusiastic partner of JASA in the production and distribution of educational materials regarding heat stroke prevention.

Natural Sports Nutrition: Diet for Champions

They say that great artists are made, not born. The same could also be said for athletes. Of course, genetics plays a large part in differentiating a mere athlete from a sports champion, but to be able to attain that legendary status in the Hall of Fame, an aspiring sportsman must go through the strictest of diets that will help shape and strengthen the physique.

By drinking sufficient amounts of water and consuming a balanced diet, the body can generate a lot of energy, which will greatly help in boosting for top athletic performance.

What are the factors to be considered in designing a complete and healthy natural sports nutrition program?

1. Hydration

Obviously, the most important thing in natural sports nutrition is water. The significance of water can never be discounted because the human body is composed of sixty percent of it, and every bodily function cannot work without water. The good old eight-cups-of-water-a-day recommendation is essential because the body must replace the water it eliminates, like sweat and urine.

Here are some helpful reminders to maintain proper hydration:

- Instead of slugging humongous amounts of water in infrequent sittings, drink small portions in frequent durations.
- Cold beverages aid the body in cooling down body temperature, therefore cutting down the amount of sweating.
- One should drink 2-3 cups of water for every pound that the body losses after exercising.

2. Sources of Fuel

A balanced diet is another must for natural sports nutrition. Athletes must acquire the perfect combination of calories that can be consumed from protein, carbohydrates and fats, which are great sources of energy.

Carbohydrates are the most important fuel source, which can be found in foods such as breads, pastas, rice, fruits, veggies and cereals. These foods can supply the body about seventy percent of the needed daily calories. Carbs provide the body the power and endurance it needs for short-duration activities that involve maximum level of intensity. This fuel comes from the energy given by sugar and starches that the body converts.

Here are strategies to maximize the potential of carbs:

- Start loading up on carbs at least several days before prior to the competition.

- Carbs should be consumed in greater amounts in the duration of activities that lasts more than one hour to fend off the onset of fatigue.

Another imperative factor in natural sports nutrition is proteins. Athletes should eat lots of dairy, eggs, meats, fish and chicken, along with nuts and beans. Protein supplies as much as fifteen percent of calories in the body. To determine the amount of protein needed by an athlete, the following factors should be considered: his fitness level, the type of exercise along with its duration and intensity, and his overall carb and calorie intake.

The last fuel source that is important for natural sports nutrition is fats. There are two kinds: saturated and unsaturated. Although it is a significant component in nutrition, the intake of fats should be strictly monitored. Too much consumption of fats may lead to major health problems such as cancer and heart disease.

The road to sports excellence is not easy. Along with fostering courage and determination, athletes have to follow the strict regimen brought on by natural sports nutrition. But all of these will be worth the trouble once victory is achieved.

Sports Nutrition and Quick Food Fixes

Athletes are busy people. They try to balance training with work, school, family and other activities. With all these responsibilities, athletes consume a lot of energy each day. Food preparation can become a challenge but it is a challenge that athletes need to face since good sports nutrition help to adequately fuel workouts and improve performance and recovery.

Eating well should be a part of an athlete's overall training plan. But buying well is a requirement for eating well.

Nutritious meals begin at the grocery store. If you purchase the right ingredients, it's a cinch to whip up a nutritious and flavorful meal. Stocking up with healthy staples is critical to good sports nutrition and will give you many options when you get home from a workout. Here are some foods busy athletes must be armed with.

Freeze Health

- Frozen foods are time-savers. Many prepackaged frozen items let you use the exact amount you need thus cutting cleaning up time. Leftovers are also instant meals on a busy night.

- Freezing is an important method of preserving most nutrients. Frozen vegetables are a lot of help because they require no washing, chopping, or peeling. Serve vegetables as a side dish, or incorporate into soups, sauces, or pasta dishes.

- Frozen fruit has longer shelf-life and are easily available if supply of fresh ones is low. Frozen blueberries, mixed berries, and mangoes can be blended into a smoothie with fruit juice and milk or yogurt or used as cereal topping.

- Chicken breasts or fish fillets that are frozen in individual packing are a good protein source for your meals. Frozen meatballs provide variation and can be easily mixed with pasta.

Pantry Staples

Canned products don't compromise nutrition. Upon being harvested fruits and vegetables are processed to keep nutrients locked in.

- Beans that are canned are nutrient dense, and will load you with the important fuel for maximum growth and sports performance.

- Canned tuna and salmon are rich in protein and omega-3 fats, which have been shown to help conditions of cancer, heart disease, arthritis and mental health. Pasta dishes, salads and sandwiches can be given another character by including these in the recipe.

Peanut Butter is a good source of calories, and for busy athletes, an easy fill. Use this as sandwich spread and top with a banana or enjoy with carrot strips. Peanut butter is packed with healthy mono- and polyunsaturated fats and vitamin E.

Popular among athletes is the use of tomato sauce. Processed tomatoes are concentrated with protective compounds. One half-cup of tomato sauce, for instance, contains six times more of the antioxidant lycopene than a medium fresh tomato.

Tomato sauce is usually cooked with pasta which is a staple of many athletes' sports nutrition diet. If available, use the whole grain variety because refined pasta has been stripped off of its vitamins, fiber and other nutrients. Frozen bell peppers and tuna can boost protein content of meals with tomato sauce.

A wide variety of whole grains must be explored, examples of which are brown rice and red rice. Whole grains take a little longer to cook so cook in medium batches just enough to have leftovers for the next day.

In the Fridge

Fridge wonders include pre-washed and ready-to-eat salad greens and carrots, cheese, eggs, milk, and yogurt.

Soup: A variety of quick-fix ingredients

Soups combine the textures and flavors of the different ingredients mentioned previously. Soups are not only satisfying but can contain the wide range of nutrients available in its ingredients. Soups are easy to concoct and make great leftovers.

Nutritious soups do not need endless chopping or toiling over a hot oven. Canned or frozen vegetables can make up your soup and they can be fixed on a microwave or stovetop.

To make minestrone in minutes, combine canned crushed tomatoes with chicken or vegetables broth, canned beans, and frozen vegetables. Let simmer and enjoy.

To make gazpacho, in a blender or food processor, mix vegetable juice, canned tomatoes, minced garlic, red onion, cucumber chunks, bell pepper chunks, splash of red wine vinegar, olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste. Vitamin C and other important nutrients load this combination. Gazpacho can even help decrease inflammation and oxidative stress.

Sports Nutrition Products: A Need or Just a Marketing Invention?

Even if you are into sports, you'll only need your regular diet plus plenty of water. Thus, you do not need a sport nutrition product. Right? Wrong.

The need for sports and sport nutrition product

Records of antiquities show that athletics has been an integral part of earliest man's life. Athletic life was originally meant for survival through gathering food or for self-protection. Later, it developed into a contest for strength, speed, skill, and mental sharpness. With the passage of time, these activities evolved into what we now know as different forms of exercises, or sports.

Our ancestors even then, fully understand the need of our body for exercise and other forms of physical activities. They instinctively know that in order to maintain their health and further developed their physical whole being, they need to have some activities. And from this early, they understand the need for a special food, the modern version of which is our sport nutrition product.

Basic dietary patterns of our ancestors

Evidences about prehistoric people's diets can be glimpsed from the artifacts used in food preparation such as milling, baking, and ultimately cooking. From these bits of information, we are informed that the basic diet of early Greeks and Romans for instance was a perfect combination of plant and animal products. They ate several variety of cereals, vegetables, fruits (fresh and dried), and lots of wine (usually diluted with water in varying degree).

Early Greeks' main meat source is that of goats. In Italy it was pork meat products specially bacon. Beef was occasionally eaten, particularly after sacrifices in numerous temples. Milk, and perhaps milk product, was a very popular food. Fish and poultry were also part of the regular diet. The slight difference of these early people with our modern diet is that olive oil was consumed in greater volume than butter. The oil was also a main source for household lighting.

Combined with good sport nutrition product, this diet, a formula made thousands of years ago, is a perfect dietary program for a modern sports man. Our ancestors knew then, that although foods abound in nature, there are several nutritional sources that fit better a healthy lifestyle.

Sports nutrition product

Fast forward into our modern setting. It is important for athletes to have good nutrition for maximum strength, optimum agility, endurance, and improved overall performance. The

foundation for any successful athletic program is a good combination of a well-thought based on whole foods (veggies, fruits, whole grains, and proteins, remember the Greeks?) supplemented with a special sport nutrition product, and course a good regimen of exercise.

While it is true that dedication, good training techniques, and genetics are still the main element in an athlete's effectiveness, the lack of a proper nutrition coupled with the absence of nutritional supplement like sport nutrition product can inhibit an athlete's performance in any other forms of exercise.

Without a good eating habits combined with sport nutrition product, pre-games and competitions proper may end disastrously. Optimal nutrition is only attainable with perfect dietary practice, combined with sport nutrition product as important element. It is only thru a sustained adherence to this good combination of regimen and sport nutrition product that a stellar performance is assured.

Sports nutrition product sales increasing

In 2003, it was reported that overall retail market for sports nutrition products, reached the value of \$3.1 billion. Beverages accounted for 63 percent of sales, according to a new report Packaged Facts. However, these drinks have been marketed more for general nutrition, rather than sports benefits. Packaged Facts confirmed that physically active adults were only 10-percent more likely to use sports beverages than the general adult population.

But at least this is a start. It would still take a while before people realized that a good and sound body is never possible only by eating traditional foods, but by following a particular sports, combined with healthy food, and of course, with sport nutrition product.

We should learn from the early Greeks and Romans. By experience, they have learned that involving in a regular physical activities and consuming a well-balanced nutrition can result in a long and fruitful life.

Sports Nutrition: Energy Levels and High-Vitamin Diets.

Good nutrition is very important regardless of which sport you do. A variety of nutrients are needed in your daily diet to keep fit and healthy.

A balanced diet should provide the right proportions of carbohydrate, fat, protein, vitamins and minerals, water and dietary fiber.

Energy is the most important nutritional factor for any form of physical activity. Carbohydrate and fat are the main fuels used by exercising muscles. Vitamins and minerals are also crucial in energy metabolism. A diet deficient in vitamin and minerals can compromise sporting performance.

The importance of a high-vitamin diet

In order to obtain vitamins and minerals, athletes need to eat a wide assortment of nutrient-dense foods in amounts that will maintain energy balance. This means that a person must consume 1,200 to 1,500 kilo-calories a day.

Meeting vitamin and mineral requirements when energy intake is 3,000 kcal/day or higher (as is among male and female ice hockey and cross country skiers) is actually easy. Even athletes whose energy intakes may be about 2,000 kcal/day can meet their vitamin and mineral needs from food alone.

As long as a wide variety of foods are eaten, vitamin and mineral intake is adequate. Supplementation therefore is not necessary.

High in vitamins are fruits and vegetables. Many of these are good antioxidants sources as well. High-color food choices mean high vitamin content thus high energy storage. Look for yellow-orange, red, deep green, and blue in your food. For athletes, five to nine fruit and vegetable servings are recommended each day. Grains also contain both vitamins and minerals.

Is more better?

Athletes usually meet two-thirds or more of the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDAs) for vitamins and minerals. Athletes who have high calorie intakes of about 5,000 to 6,000 kcal/day may achieve 200% or more of the RDA for some vitamins and minerals just from foods they eat.

Despite this fact, most of the athletes who are concerned with sports nutrition take supplements to boost performance. While vitamin and mineral deficiencies impair physical performance, research indicates that supplementation of a nutritionally adequate sports diet does not improve physical work capacity, endurance, oxygen consumption, cardiovascular function, muscle strength, or resistance to fatigue.

For example, because B-vitamins release energy from nutrients, athletes with high energy expenditures have increased requirements for B-vitamins. However, eating more food provides the needed extra B-vitamins.

When are vitamin supplements needed?

Vitamin supplements are commonly used if an athlete's diet is not enough for his energy requirements. Vitamin supplements provide "health insurance," as sort of back-up to ensure optimal sports nutrition.

Multivitamin supplements with no more than 100% of the Daily Value (DV.) provide a safe and adequate balance of vitamins. However, it should not be forgotten that the goal is still to eat a wide variety of foods. Food contains fiber and a multitude of phytochemicals that provide many health benefits.

Supplements should never be replacements for food. While many sports supplements contain the antioxidant beta carotene, at least 450 carotenoids are only found in food. Antioxidant value exists in other carotenoids as well.

Minerals for injury prevention

Minerals like calcium, iron, and zinc are especially important for athletes.

Recommendations of calcium intake are based on levels that can promote calcium retention, maximize bone mineral density, and inhibit bone loss. Lower calcium intake subjects the athlete to increased risk of stress fracture. Foods that provide good calcium stores are the following: dairy products, fish with bones, broccoli, and fortified cereals and juices.

Iron makes up hemoglobin, myoglobin and oxidative enzymes and affects oxygen transport and aerobic metabolism. To achieve optimal aerobic endurance, consuming adequate amounts is a must. Iron depletion, the first stage of iron deficiency is the most common type of iron deficiency among athletes. Lean red meats, dark poultry, fortified cereals, whole grains, and legumes are good iron sources.

Zinc, which is found in meat, poultry, seafood, and whole grains, is essential for protein synthesis, healing, and immune function. Zinc is also found in antioxidant enzymes and enzymes involved in energy metabolism.

Although minerals are needed to work hand-in-hand with vitamins to ensure good sports nutrition, we must remember that consuming any mineral excessively can interfere with digestion and the absorption of other minerals. This may lead to mineral imbalances. Also, all minerals can be toxic in large doses.

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