

FUEL FOR CHAMPIONS

Everyone knows to eat right for health, but do you know what YOU, as a professional tennis player, should eat for peak performance?

Why Does Your Body Need Protein?

Following the guidelines of the food pyramid can give you the extra power you need to improve your health and game.

- It provides a framework on what to eat for sport and health.
- It provides guidelines to: fuel your body for tennis; recover from a tough match; satisfy hunger with balanced, healthy choices; meet your needs for muscle-building protein, and ensure you are getting vitamins and minerals for strong bones and blood.

What Do Tennis Players Need?

- Tennis players need carbohydrates (bread, fruit, and athlete group) for fuel and recovery.
- Tennis players need protein (meat and dairy group) for growth, muscle repair, and recovery.
- Tennis players need vitamins, minerals, & dietary fiber. Make sure you get enough fruit and vegetables each day for these essential nutrients.
- Tennis players also need more fluids, especially in the HEAT.

Athlete Food Group

As an athlete, you need a certain number of calories to keep your body functioning and provide energy for your high-intensity physical activities. There are foods created specifically for athletes to provide extra fuel for training and recovery.

Athlete-specific foods consist of:

- Sport drink
- Sport gels
- Sport bars
- Recovery drinks
- Chocolate milk



Grains

Any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or another cereal grain is a grain product. Bread, pasta, rice cakes, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas, and grits are examples of grain products. These foods are carbohydrates which provide the fuel and energy for performance. Make sure you have at least one of the foods listed below at each main meal (three times per day).

Refined Grains:

- Wheat flour
- White bread
- White rice

Whole Grains:

- Whole-wheat flour
- Bulgar (cracked wheat)
- Oatmeal
- Whole cornmeal
- Brown rice



Vegetables

Any vegetable or 100% vegetable juice counts as a member of the vegetable group. Vegetables may be raw or cooked; fresh, frozen, canned, or dried/dehydrated; and may be whole, cut-up, or mashed. Vegetables are organized into 5 subgroups, based on their nutrient content. These foods are rich in minerals, antioxidant vitamins, and dietary fiber. Make sure you have five servings of vegetables per day, selected from 2 different groups.

Dried Beans & Peas:

- Black beans
- Kidney beans
- Pinto beans
- Soy beans

Dark Green:

- Broccoli
- Green leafy lettuce
- Kale
- Spinach

Orange:

- Squash
- Carrots
- Pumpkin
- Sweet potatoes

Starchy:

- Corn
- Potatoes

Other:

- Asparagus
- Cabbage
- Celery
- Zucchini



Dairy

Foods made from milk that retain their calcium content are part of the group, while foods made from milk that have little to no calcium, such as cream cheese, cream, and butter, are not. Tennis players need at least 3-4 servings from the milk group per day depending on age.

Commonly eaten choices:

- Flavored or Lactose-Free Milk
- Milk-based desserts: pudding, frozen yogurt, ice cream
- Hard natural cheeses: cheddar, Swiss, parmesan
- Soft cheeses: ricotta, cottage cheese
- Yogurt and yogurt drinks



Fruit

Any fruit or 100% fruit juice counts as part of the fruit group. Fruits may be fresh, canned, frozen, or dried, and may be whole, cut up, or pureed. These foods provide fuel for tennis; fiber and essential vitamins and minerals. Make sure you eat at least two servings of fruit per day.

Some commonly eaten fruits are:

- Apples
- Bananas
- Mangoes
- Melons
- Oranges
- Pears
- Pineapple
- Berries
- Raisins



Meats & Beans

The meat group is an excellent source of protein that contains all the essential amino acids. It is also a great source of iron and zinc. Dry beans and peas are part of this group as well.

**Vegetarians need to combine foods to get a complete protein source. If you have special dietary needs, consult a dietitian to ensure you get enough protein.

Common choices:

- Meat: beef, ham, lamb, pork, veal
- Poultry & Eggs: chicken, turkey, duck, eggs
- Dry beans and peas: black beans, falafel, tofu
- Nuts and seeds: almonds, cashews, peanuts, sesame & sunflower seeds
- Fish: flounder, halibut, salmon, tuna, crayfish, lobster, scallops
- Include protein with 2-3 meals per day.



Fats & Oils

Oils are fats that are liquid at room temperature and come from different plants and fish. Solid fats, (solid at room temperature), like butter, come from animal foods or can be made from vegetable oils.

A small amount of fats and oils should be eaten daily to provide essential fatty acids and fat-soluble vitamins. Omega-3-fatty acids are health-promoting fats found in avocado, soybeans, almonds, flax seeds, and oily fish.

