Dynamic Chiropractic

SPORTS / EXERCISE / FITNESS

Beginning Sports Nutrition

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Sports nutrition is in a virtual explosion. As Americans continue to strive for fitness -- scientists, health professionals, businessmen, entrepreneurs, and athletes are trying for a piece of the supplemental pie. Most of us have an athlete or two as a patient. When they approach you for advice on optimizing their performance and asking you which supplements to take, you should begin with the basics.

1. The diet should be high in complex carbohydrates, with 60-75% of the daily calories coming from the complex carbohydrates. This includes whole grains, fresh vegetables, and fresh fruits.

2. A moderate protein intake of 15-25% of the daily calories. Fish, chicken, turkey, legumes and nonfat dairy are the preferred sources of protein. Consumption of pork and beef should be minimized and not exceed two servings per week.

3. A lowfat diet with 10-20% of total calories coming from fats, with 75% of these calories as polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats.

4. A broad-based, balanced, multivitamin, multimineral formula with water-soluble vitamin levels that exceed the RDA by a factor of at least five, fat-soluble vitamins that meet or exceed the RDA by a factor of at least two, and minerals that meet the RDA.

5. Water, and lots of it.

6. Minimize empty calorie foods, such as soft drinks, chips, candy, fast foods, and highly processed foods.

The variables in the percentages in number one, two, and three above depend on the sport or type of activity your patient is engaged in, with endurance athletes needing more complex carbohydrates and power athletes needing more protein. Fat intake is based on whether the patient needs to gain, lose or maintain his current body weight.

This type of diet should be established before you recommend performance-enhancing substances for your patient. Before you recommend performance-enhancing substances, many of your patients will realize gains just by cleaning up their diet. As long as they continue to improve, keep them on their vitamins and minerals only. The time for help is when a performance plateau is reached. The question then, is, what do you recommend? Below is a list of substances I will address in future articles. By the time this is published, the odds are that gyms and health food stores will have even more new supplements out. A few of these substances have been used by athletes for years. Most, however, are fairly new. Some work, some don't, some are based on research and others are just theoretical. Most of them have one thing in common: There is very little published about them. This is mainly due to the fact that the sports supplement market is exploding at an unheard-of pace. In future articles, I will try to define and describe these substances, cite available research, and give advice on which to use for what type of activity and what doses are needed for optimal responses.

Bee pollen
Flower pollen
Octacosanol
Desiccated liver
Gama orazanol
Cyclofenil
Succinates
Inosine
Similax officinalis
Yohimbe bark
Betasitosterol
Sarsaparilla root
Dimethylglycine
Carnitine
Ginseng

Amino acids which include free-form, branch chain, and peptide bonded Metabolic optimizers

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