



TRAVEL NUTRITION

Physically Speaking

April, 2015

NUTRITION ON THE GO

The **planning phase** prior to departing for a tournament is crucial to your performance. In this **planning phase** you take into account surface, equipment adjustments, travel and acclimatization. Another key element of the **planning phase** is **nutrition**. To prepare for tournaments, it is important to be proactive and set travel and competition nutrition plans. When away from home, often the foods offered are unfamiliar and/or unavailable. This can lead to suboptimal (under) fueling, decreased performance and other complications. Read on to learn some tips and advice about general travel nutrition that will allow you to maximize your performance on match days and for the duration of the tournament.

BEFORE YOU TRAVEL

Some players may choose to carry travel **nutrition equipment** which allows them to prepare suitable athletic meals anywhere in the world. This can include a hot pot travel cooker, travel power converter, measuring cups, spoons and a selection of the following foods:



Foods to pack for the plane:	Foods to pack for use abroad (bring or send ahead):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bottled water and sport beverages Powdered sports drink (individual sachets) Low fat muesli bars High carbohydrate sports bars Home-made sandwiches Dried fruit or fruit/vegetable leathers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakfast cereal Instant porridge sachets, grits, cream of rice Instant noodles Low fat muesli bars Dried fruit Nuts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fruit cups Sports drink powder Meal supplement powder Sports bars Fruit juice concentrate Powdered milk

ON THE PLANE (WHEN YOUR TOURNAMENT REALLY STARTS)

At airports, familiarize yourself with healthier restaurant options that meet training diet recommendations for higher complex carbohydrate and lower fat content. **During your flight:**

- Choose tomato juices, soups and salty snack such as pretzels in flight to help maintain fluid status.
- Buy a sport beverage in the airport, and drink it on the flight.
- Take a drink bottle onboard and refill frequently and drink extra fluids at each meal.
- Choose either the regular meal option or, to meet any special dietary needs, order your special meal, such as a vegetarian or low cholesterol in advance to obtain a meal more suitable for sport performance.
- If airline meals are too small for you, ask for extra bread and fruit.
- Carry additional snacks onboard for the flight and layovers, such as bars, crackers, and pretzels that are high in carbohydrates. Do remember that if you are inactive for long periods of time, you may not require as many additional snacks as you would when training or playing matches.
- Eat more iron rich foods before flights but avoid iron supplements on the day you fly because of risk of constipation.



AFTER STEPPING OFF THE PLANE

It is important to incorporate adequate fruits and vegetables into your nutrition plan during travel. Fruits and vegetables contain antioxidants which are known to reduce respiratory illness and asthma symptoms and are beneficial to your health. Obtaining safe, fresh and readily available produce can be a challenge. Make sure that you wash (using clean bottled water) any fruit and vegetables that have skins. It may be safer to consume bottled juices and cooked vegetables if you are uncertain about the safety of the water

Here are some nutrient-dense fruits and vegetables that can help meet your nutritional and antioxidant needs:

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|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| • Guava | • Orange | • Broccoli |
| • Pink or red grapefruit | • Strawberry spinach | • Sweet potato |
| • Kiwifruit | • Kale | • Red pepper |
| • Papaya | • Collard greens | • Carrots |
| • Cantaloupe | • Brussel sprouts | • Butternut squash |
| • Apricot | • Grapes | • Tomatoes |



NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTATION

- Travel with your supplements in extra plastic sealable bags and keep them sealed.
- Take enough vitamins and other sport food supplements with you to get through your entire trip.
- Check with customs about what you can carry with you to your destination. Be aware of travel rules and limitations: some countries have strict quarantine laws about bringing food and beverages into the country. You may need to ship your supplements and food directly to your destination.



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TUMMY TROUBLES?

Gastrointestinal (GI) problems or “traveler’s diarrhea” is common when travelling. Being an athlete doesn’t protect you from such conditions. GI problems may exist for up to a week and consist of symptoms such as abdominal pain and cramping, bloating, constipation, diarrhea or loose bowels, nausea and vomiting, and/or reflux. **If you are having GI issues:**

Avoid the following foods:

- High fiber foods (whole grains, nuts, raw vegetables)
- Acidic foods (fresh orange and grapefruit juices, tomatoes, tomato sauce, salsa)
- High fat foods (fried foods, fatty meats) butter, oils, salad dressing
- Caffeine
- Spicy foods
- Alcohol

Safe foods/beverages to eat are:

- Peeled and cooked fruits and vegetables,
- White breads and dried crackers,
- Plain rice
- Juice (pear or apple), herbal teas (non-caffeine), ginger drinks
- Skinless chicken, tuna turkey, lean beef
- Probiotic yogurts
- Bottled water

SPECIAL DIETS AND MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Most tennis players need a minimum range of 25-30 grams of protein during lunch and dinner meals. If you are a **vegetarian**, maximize your protein needs with some of the following high-protein foods: legumes, soy, tofu, tempeh, seitan, meat substitutes, pasta with cheese, beans, veggie burgers/sausages, eggs, soy and rice dairy, nuts and nut butter.

Lactose intolerance, an inability to digest milk and milk products due to a lack of or absence of the enzyme lactase, can occur among athletes. Meeting calcium needs is a main concern with a lactose free diet. Use products that are fortified with calcium or eat lactose free products (e.g. soy, rice, and almond milk/cheese; coconut milk/yogurt; olive oil, soy margarine, margarine spreads).

Gluten intolerance is experienced in persons with medically diagnosed Celiac disease. There is **no** advantage to avoiding gluten if you do not have medically confirmed gluten intolerance. The tennis athlete may compromise her carbohydrate energy intake if she avoids gluten containing foods. Despite restrictions, the athlete with Celiac disease can still enjoy a wide variety of grains: corn, rice, soy, potato, buckwheat, millet, quinoa, amaranth and lentils are all naturally gluten free.

“Success is 90% Preparation, 10% Perspiration”-Anonymous

HYDRATION PREPARATION

Being well hydrated is essential for optimal performance. Adequate hydration levels leading up to competition and having normal levels of water in the body are associated with a slower onset of fatigue, lower body temperature, lower perceived rate of exertion, and proper electrolyte balance causing less body weight lost during competition.

It is important to:

- Hydrate the night before to prepare the body for experiencing the stressors of travel.
- Keep hydrating on the plane. Research indicates that the human body loses approximately 300mls (one LARGE glass) per hour from the dry atmosphere in flight.
- Drink until your urine is “lemonade color”.
- Hydrate before stepping on court.
- Appropriate choices are decaffeinated and non-carbonated beverages: water, sports drink, juices, milk.
- Avoid alcohol.
- When possible, choose salty beverages and foods when traveling both on and off the court to meet your electrolyte needs.



HOW CAN THE WTA HELP?

USANA nutritional supplement formularies and nutrition guidance provided by WTA sport dietitians are available to athletes. USANA includes an approved safe supply of nutritional sport food and supplements such as probiotics, vitamins, energy bars, and meal replacement shakes/protein powder that complies with the Tennis Anti-Doping Program. If you are interested in taking USANA please contact a WTA Primary Health Care Provider.

The Sport Sciences and Medicine and Athlete Assistance staff are available at WTA tournaments to educate athletes and to guide them to helpful resources. The WTA team includes medical advisors in many disciplines (e.g. sports dietetics, internal medicine, women’s health, cardiovascular health, orthopedic surgery, sports psychology) and the WTA’s own Athlete Assistance (counseling) and Sport Science and Medicine Departments. If you are struggling with travel challenges, the staff works with you to assist your learning. The WTA Tour advisors are available for players to consult in person at various events throughout the year.

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