

# FUEL



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## CHOOSE WISELY

With hundreds of sports nutrition products on the market, the once simple process of choosing a gel or sports drink now requires a degree in sports nutrition. Follow this guide to simplify the selection process.

**By Lauren Antonucci**

### » Pre-training

**What you need:** Your specific pre-training/racing needs depend on your body weight and the amount of time you have between ingestion and start time. However, whether you have 15 minutes or two hours until you start exercising, focusing on adequate fluids plus carbohydrates that go down easily and digest quickly will leave you feeling energized when you begin your effort.

**What to look for:** 25-45g of carbohydrate, up to 12g of protein. Bonus points for 100–200mg of sodium.

**My favorites:** If you have more than two hours before

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your workout and a high training volume, choose **ProBar**. With 42g of carbs, 11g of protein and an organic ingredient list of real foods, it merges healthy snack and sports fueling perfectly. My favorite is cocoa pistachio, with oats, seeds, pistachios, cacao nibs and 760mg of omega-3 fats per bar. If you have one hour, try **Hamer Ultimate Energy Bar**. With 26g of carbs and 9g of protein, this gluten-free, vegetarian bar is easy to both chew and digest. If you have just 15 minutes, eat **G Series Pro Carb Energy Chews**. Each pack of four tasty, fast-acting chews contains 31g of carbohydrates and vitamins B3, B5 and B6. These chews have saved me many times when I needed quick fuel for a last-minute workout. Keep a pack in your desk and gym bag to ensure you can work out whenever and wherever the chance arises.

» **During workouts and races**

**What you need:** Adequate fluids, carbohydrates and the key electrolyte sodium will fuel your muscles and help stave off muscle cramps and undue fatigue. Aim for at least 30–60g of carbohydrates per hour for longer events.

**What to look for:** I tell my half- and full Ironman athletes that first they must find a sports drink they like the taste of and tolerate well. Choose one with 50–70 calories and 110–200mg of sodium per 8 ounces. Next, add bars, gels, blocks and chews to fully meet your carbohydrate and calorie needs.

**My favorites:** **Infinit Nutrition's** online customizable formula helps athletes meet their individual needs.

Move the virtual sliders to adjust calories, flavor, sodium, protein and even caffeine content of your drink. It's great for salty



sweaters, those who like a light flavor and athletes who want amino acids for longer races. **Honey Stinger Waffles** contain 21g of carbs in a thin, sweet treat inspired by European *stroopwafels*. My athletes love them on the bike and report them as going down easily. For those with higher calorie needs (70.3 and full Ironman), a **Bonk Breaker Bar** provides 34g of carbs, 7g of protein and 140mg of sodium per gluten- and dairy-free bar.

» **Post-training or race recovery**

**What you need:** Replacement of fluids lost to sweat, carbs, protein and sodium within 30–60 minutes post-effort. Also: anti-inflammatory good fats or antioxidants.

**What to look for:** Aim for half your body weight in grams of carbs and a quarter

of that in protein (ex: 60g carbs, 15g of protein for 120-pound athlete), plus 24 ounces of fluid per pound lost to sweat during your workout.

**My favorites:** Two of my favorite recovery products are **Clif Builder's Bar** and **Clif Shot Roks**. I pair either with fruit for the perfect rewarding combo of a protein bar, fluids and antioxidants. My other favorite recovery reward is something I make in my own kitchen: a recovery smoothie made with low-fat Greek yogurt, fresh fruit and ground flaxseeds. **1**

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