


SPORTS NUTRITION

The Natural,  Way



Your Complete
Guide to Before,
During and After
Exercise Nutrition



Clean Eating

RAISE THE ENERGY BAR*



This advanced energy formula has an energizing 10,000 mcg blast of vitamin B-12 plus natural caffeine, folate, ribose, and taurine to boost your day and keep you at the top of your game! Simply pop the tart-berry flavored powder straight in your mouth from the stick for instant on-the-go energy.**



This product is certified with Informed-Sport. For more information please visit informed-sport.com.



nowsportsproducts.com

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

Clean Eating

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The Natural Athlete

Athletes of all kinds, from casual to competitive, know that proper nutrition is the foundation of success. The core components of sports nutrition include a well-designed, comprehensive plan with the right mix of macronutrients, sufficient rest and recovery, and abundant hydration. In addition to these basics, high-quality dietary supplements can help promote energy and endurance, enhance performance, speed recovery and support any fitness goal. Whether you’re a competitive athlete or a weekend warrior, keep your active body healthy, energized and running strong—the natural way.

PHOTO BY MONKEY BUSINESS IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

FOOD AS FUEL:

The Role Of Macronutrients

The foods on your plate are your body's primary sources of macronutrients—proteins, fats and carbohydrates, which are essential for energy, muscle growth, repair and a highly functioning body. Here's a rundown of each:

PROTEIN: muscle growth, repair and recovery.

Dietary protein is critical for athletes, to promote muscle mass, as well as to repair and rebuild muscles and connective tissues after training, offset damage and speed recovery. And it's well known that serious exercisers need more protein than the average individual; studies in the 1980s and '90s first suggested total protein requirements were 50 to 175 percent higher in athletes than in sedentary controls.

Individual protein needs vary, depending on age, body composition, type of exercise and training status. For building and maintaining muscle, daily protein recommendations range from 1.4 to 2 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight per day (0.5 to 0.8 grams per pound of body weight), and some evidence suggests higher protein intakes may also promote fat loss in resistance training. Focus on whole-food sources of protein that contain all of the essential amino acids, like lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs and yogurt. For vegan athletes, legumes, nuts, seeds, quinoa and tempeh, ideally combined with whole grains, are excellent sources of protein. While it's possible to get your daily protein requirements through a whole-foods diet, supplementing with high-quality proteins can ensure you're getting enough, while minimizing caloric intake—especially important for those who are focusing on fat loss.



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FATS: energy, nutrient absorption, overall health.

High-quality fats are a crucial component of any athlete's diet. Dietary fats promote absorption of important nutrients, play a role in hormone production, and provide essential fatty acids that play a role in immune balance, bone strength and joint health.

For light to moderate intensity exercise, fat is usually the primary fuel, and it's also important for muscles during endurance exercise. Fats are a valuable, energy-dense source of fuel; while the body has a limited capacity to store carbohydrates, the capacity to store fat is much greater. For example, an average athlete with 6 percent body fat may carry about 1,500 to 2,000 calories in the form of carbohydrates, but more than 45,000 calories in the form of fat. So, if you're involved in an endurance sport that requires a burst of power, like swimming, boxing, basketball or soccer, fat as a source of fuel may be especially important.

In general, most athletes should get about 20 to 35 percent of their calories from fat. Best sources: monounsaturated fats and omega-3 polyunsaturated fats in foods like fish, olives and olive oil, avocados, nuts and seeds. And medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs) from coconut oil are easily digested and can promote energy.

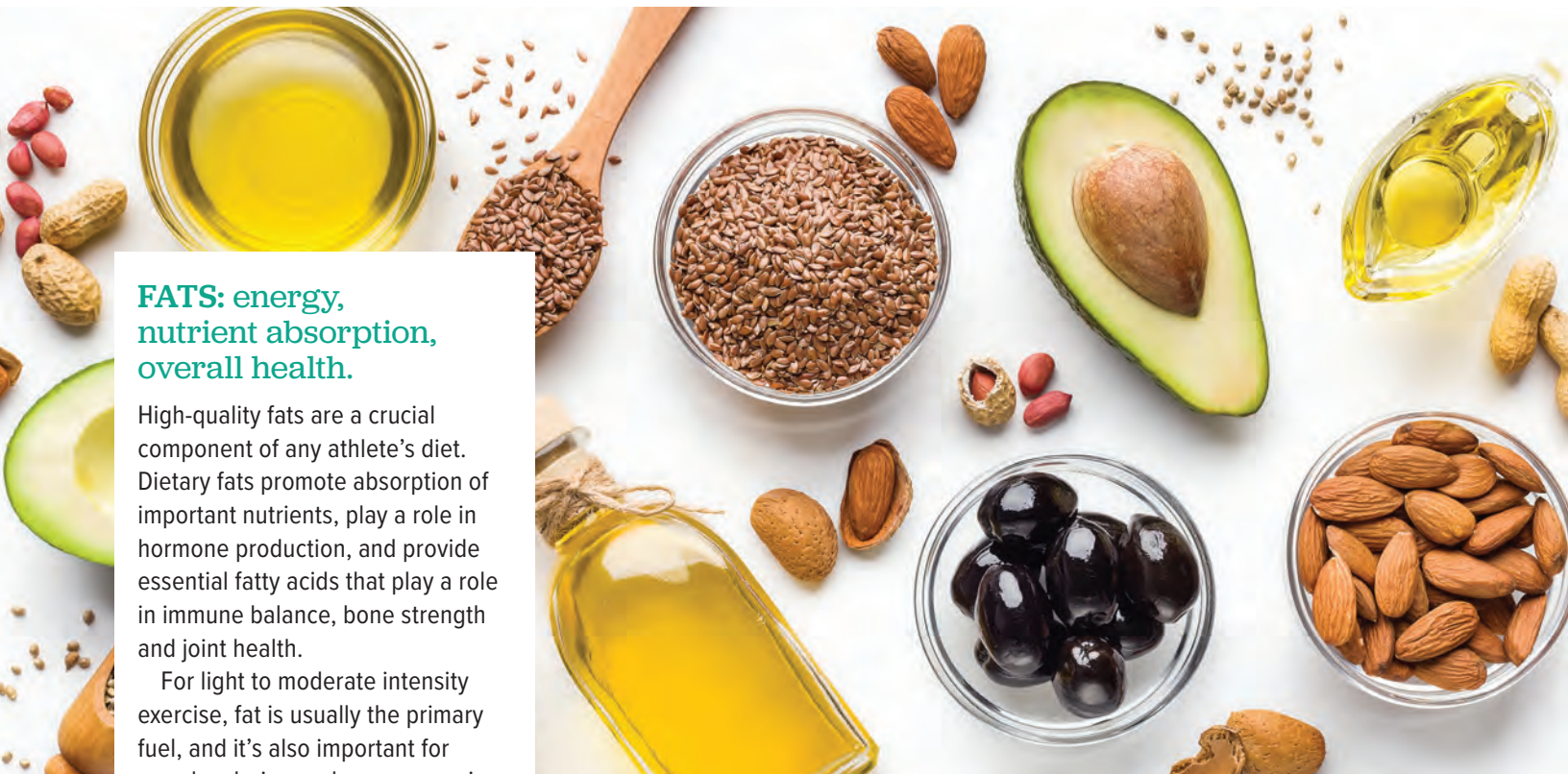
CARBOHYDRATES: energy, endurance, performance

Compared to protein and dietary fat, carbohydrates are the most efficiently broken down and metabolized form of energy for the body, so they're vital for athletes. A diet rich in high-quality carbohydrates enhances endurance exercise as well as intermittent high-intensity performance, delays fatigue and improves athletic performance. Carbohydrates are also important for muscle gain—without adequate stores of glucose, muscle protein may be used for fuel. With sufficient carbohydrate intake, protein is spared and used to repair and rebuild muscles.

When you eat carbs, your body breaks them down into smaller units of sugar; the liver converts these into glucose, which the body uses for energy. If glucose isn't immediately needed, it's stored in the liver and skeletal muscles in the form of glycogen. During extended exercise, muscle glycogen is depleted

and carbohydrate stores must be replenished; studies show eating carbs during workouts lasting over one hour can benefit performance and delay onset of fatigue.

In general, athletes need about 6 to 10 grams of carbohydrate per kg of body weight per day. If you're involved in cardiovascular training, you should get about 60 percent of your daily calories from carbohydrates; for resistance training, shoot for about 45 percent.¹⁸ Best sources: unrefined, whole foods like sweet potatoes, leafy greens, bananas, berries, legumes and whole grains like wild rice and rolled oats.



Before, During and After Exercise: What to Take

Getting the right nutrition is important—and *when* you take certain supplements may be as important as *what* you take. Here's what you need, before, during and after exercise.



PRE-WORKOUT:

Energy, Focus, Performance*

BRANCHED-CHAIN AMINO ACIDS (BCAAS)

include three essential amino acids—leucine, isoleucine and valine—that can help maximize output during workouts, support muscle growth and retention, and enhance recovery.* Formulas that include a natural source of caffeine also help maintain physical energy and focus during workouts.* Added electrolytes also supplement and replenish what's lost during strenuous activity.*



MEDIUM-CHAIN TRIGLYCERIDES (MCTS)

are naturally occurring fats that behave differently in the body from other fats. Unlike longer-chain fatty acids, they're rapidly broken down and absorbed and go directly to the liver, where they can be used as a source of energy. Taken before a workout, MCTs can help increase energy, enhance endurance and promote burning fat for fuel. Powdered MCT oil blended with whey protein is a convenient way to add MCTs as well as protein to pre-workout drinks or smoothies.



VITAMIN B₁₂ plays a critical role in energy metabolism, helping the body produce energy from carbohydrates, proteins and fats; it's also necessary for producing red blood cells, keeping nerve cells healthy and other important functions.* B₁₂ formulas that include the amino acid taurine may also improve exercise performance and delay fatigue; added caffeine from natural sources can also help maintain physical energy and focus during workouts.*



BETA-ALANINE is a non-essential amino acid used by muscle cells to synthesize carnosine—a compound that buffers lactic acid produced during strenuous exercise, helping to maintain optimum muscular pH, delay muscle fatigue and improve recovery time.* In studies, taking beta-alanine is significantly more effective than taking carnosine as a supplement, and CarnoSyn®, a patented form of beta-alanine, has been clinically shown to increase muscle carnosine content, allowing muscles to work harder and longer during intense exercise.*





DURING WORKOUTS:

Hydration, energy, replenishing electrolytes*

ELECTROLYTES – minerals like sodium, potassium and magnesium that carry an electrical charge—are essential for fluid balance, muscle contractions and nerve impulse transmission.* During exercise, electrolytes are depleted through sweat, and low levels can lead to muscle cramps, weakness and fatigue. It's also important to stay hydrated, since even mild dehydration can hamper performance. Flavored electrolyte blends can replenish electrolytes and encourage drinking more water.



BCAAs can be used as fuel during intense exercise, and supplementation can help preserve existing muscle tissue.* Formulas that include other supportive nutrients can also boost endurance and promote muscle retention and recovery—without caffeine.* Betaine helps maintain fluid balance during exercise and may enhance power, endurance, muscle gain and fat loss.* Taurine can delay fatigue and protect muscles from damage.* Citrulline and glutamine may also support performance and reduce fatigue.*





POST-WORKOUT:

Muscle recovery and normal repair, replacing lost fluids

PROTEIN is essential after working out, to help muscles recover and rebuild after exertion. Whey protein is an easily digested, high-quality protein with all nine essential amino acids, including BCAAs like leucine. Studies suggest whey protein can enhance muscle gain and promote recovery, especially when taken post-workout. And drinking a protein shake after working out also replenishes lost fluids.

KETO-FRIENDLY PROTEIN POWDERS that combine whey protein isolate with MCT powder offer the ideal balance of protein and fat and are an excellent choice for anyone following a Keto or low-carb diet. Monk fruit and stevia are the best natural sweeteners for a sugar-free but flavorful option.

VEGAN PROTEIN POWDERS made from pea protein isolate are ideal for vegan and vegetarian athletes, people with dairy sensitivities, or anyone who has difficulty supplementing with other types of protein. Pea protein is highly bioavailable and easily-digested, and a source of BCAAs and arginine.



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Female Athletes: what women need to know

It may sound obvious—but female athletes aren't just male athletes adjusted for weight. Active women have unique and specific nutritional needs that vary, sometimes dramatically, from those for men. Women who work out are often low in certain micronutrients—especially calcium, iron, zinc, vitamin D and B-vitamins—and recent studies suggest inadequate intake of macronutrients is more common in female athletes than in their male counterparts.

Women are also more likely to limit their caloric intake—sometimes for weight loss, sometimes accidentally during hard-core training. The result: increased risk of fatigue, injuries and illness, and diminished athletic

performance. Over time, insufficient caloric intake in female athletes disrupts hormone production, affects menstrual cycles, and impacts bone density, immune function, cardiovascular and reproductive health, and psychological well-being.

If you're a female athlete—competitive or casual—look for clean sports supplements to ensure you're getting the right nutrients to nourish your body and support performance. A high-quality protein powder can help you meet your protein needs, and micronutrient supplements like calcium and iron will ensure your body stays fit, healthy and strong.

And that doesn't mean you won't benefit from some of the same

supplements traditionally used by men to increase muscle mass. Taking the right sports supplements before, during and after workouts is just as important for female athletes as their male counterparts. **Creatine** can help active women build lean muscle and sustain higher energy levels throughout intense workouts, and some research suggests it may also support healthy bones and skeletal mass—critical for women over 50.* **Beta-alanine** supplements may be especially important for female athletes, since they have less baseline carnosine in their muscles; in studies, supplementing with beta-alanine delayed the onset of fatigue and enhanced performance in women.* And **BCAAs** help build lean muscle and increase strength—without bulking up.*

PHOTO BY MONKEY BUSINESS IMAGES

PLANT-FUELED PERFORMANCE:

high-powered proteins for meat-free athletes

If you're a vegetarian or vegan athlete, you know how hard it is to find high-quality plant-based protein supplements. Consider these vegan options, to fuel your active body with all the protein it needs.



Soy protein.

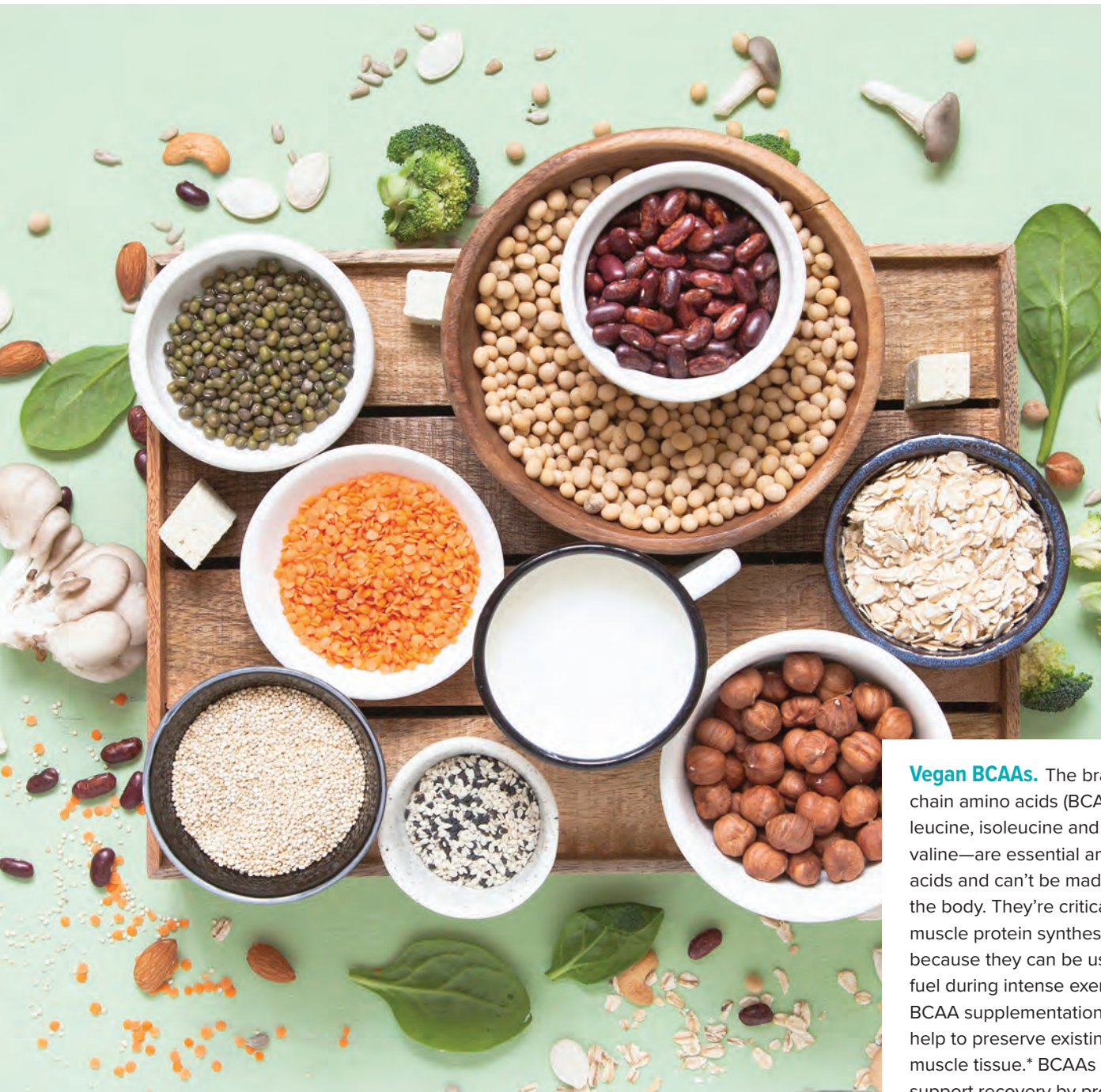
Soy protein isolate is a high-quality, complete protein with an excellent amino acid profile, and it has a high BCAA content. Soy proteins also have naturally occurring phytoestrogens and beneficial proteins like genistein and daidzein. Soy protein has a rich, creamy texture that's especially good in smoothies.

Pea protein. Pea protein isolate, extracted from yellow peas, is an excellent source of highly bioavailable, easy-to-digest protein. The amino acid profile is similar to soy, but pea protein is less likely to be allergenic, so it's great for athletes with food sensitivities. Its smooth texture and mild flavor blend well with any of your favorite beverages.

Plant protein complex. A vegan protein blend that includes pea, hemp and quinoa sources offers a complete amino acid profile and a source of BCAAs. Quinoa protein powder, from quinoa seeds, is considered a complete protein source, and hemp protein offers a balanced ratio of omega-3 and -6 fats, as well as gamma-linoleic acid (GLA).



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Rice protein. If you can't tolerate some of the natural compounds found in soy and other vegan protein sources, rice protein powder is perfect for you. Made from brown rice, it's one of the least allergenic foods and is an excellent choice for people with food allergies or sensitivities. Sprouting brown rice breaks down compounds called phytates that can interfere with the absorption of minerals like calcium and zinc. It's also easy to digest and has a neutral flavor that mixes easily into any beverage.



Vegan BCAAs. The branched-chain amino acids (BCAAs)—leucine, isoleucine and valine—are essential amino acids and can't be made in the body. They're critical for muscle protein synthesis, and because they can be used as fuel during intense exercise, BCAA supplementation can help to preserve existing muscle tissue.* BCAAs also help support recovery by promoting the normal repair processes that take place after exertion, and they play an important role in the maintenance of proper immune system function and healthy aging.* But not all BCAAs are vegan; look for powders or capsules labeled “vegan” to ensure yours is free of animal products.

PHOTO BY MARIA RAZ/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



4 / RECOVERY.* In addition to active rest days and stretching, recovery supplement stacks can help preserve lean muscle mass, support immune function and enhance overall recovery.* After working out, combine one scoop of **NOW® Sports Whey Protein Powder** and 1 teaspoon L-Glutamine Powder in a shake or smoothie; drink within 30 minutes after you've finished your workout, and take two **NOW® Sports HMB** capsules.

5 / KETO-FRIENDLY. From cycling to swimming, fuel your exercise routine with a pre-workout stack that fits with your keto lifestyle. Before working out, add 1 scoop of **NOW® Sports MCT Powder with Whey Protein** to your coffee or morning smoothie and take one serving of **Triple Strength L-Carnitine Liquid** to give yourself an extra boost.*

6 / CASUAL EXERCISER. For weekend warriors, casual runners or generally active adults: focus on stacks that enhance energy, improve endurance and promote recovery.* Before you exercise, mix one **NOW® Sports B-12 Energy Boost** stick with your favorite beverage. During your workout, add one scoop of **NOW® Sports BCAA Big 6 Powder** to juice or water to keep you going.* After you've finished exercising, combine two scoops of **NOW® Sports Plant Protein Complex Powder** with one serving of L-Glutamine Powder in a shake or smoothie.



STACKING IT UP:

6 customized combinations to maximize your workout*

Ready to shake up your regular supplement regimen? Stacks—a combination of two or more supplements that complement each other—offer a customized way to maximize your performance and reach your fitness goals.* Try these 6 safe, effective stacks, designed for a variety of athletes, activities and needs:



1 / ENERGY.* Looking for more power to push through daily HIIT or weight lifting sessions? Focus on a stack of pre-workout supplements designed to enhance energy, fuel muscles, delay fatigue and promote recovery.* Combine one scoop **NOW® Sports BCAA Big 6 Powder** with 1½ teaspoons D-Ribose Powder in your favorite juice or smoothie, and take two capsules of **NOW® Sports Energy Extreme** and three capsules of Beta-Alanine before your workout.

3 / MASS-BUILDING.* For weight lifters looking to build lean mass and fuel muscles: within 30 minutes after you've finished your workout,* combine 1½ teaspoons **NOW® Sports Creatine Monohydrate Powder** and one scoop Whey Protein Isolate Powder in a smoothie or shake, and take one **Men's Active Sports Multi** or **Eve™ Women's Multi Soft Gels**.

2 / ENDURANCE.* If you're taking a long bike ride, going for a serious run or training for a marathon, choose stacks for before, during and after training to maximize endurance.* Before your workout, combine 1 teaspoon **NOW® Sports Beet Root Powder** and ¼ teaspoon **NOW® Taurine Pure Powder** in water, juice or a smoothie, and take one **NOW® Sports Arginine & Citrulline** capsule.

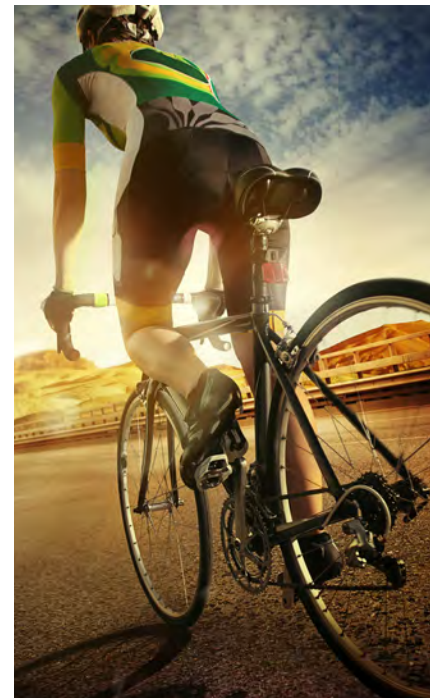


PHOTO BY POTENTIAL FILMMAKER/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM, BIKE IMAGE BY ROCKSWEEPER/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

What "Clean" Means:

Choosing the cleanest sports supplement

As studies continue to identify contaminated products in the sports market, it's more important than ever to choose a clean, natural supplement. While most manufacturers are committed to safety, irresponsible companies do exist, and research shows sports supplements may contain harmful ingredients and contaminants, including untested compounds, stimulants or banned substances that can cause liver damage, cardiac arrest or even death. They're not always listed in the ingredients, and some may be labeled as botanical extracts—making it harder for athletes to identify harmful compounds. And other sports supplements may contain ingredients like artificial colors and flavors, fillers, preservatives and high quantities of sugar—not what you need in your fitness routine.

How to choose the cleanest supplement? Look for products free from additives, like colors, flavors, fillers and preservatives; focus on brands that offer vegan, non-GMO and organic options; and choose a company that conducts rigorous, in-house testing using state-of-the-art testing instruments and highly qualified scientists and technicians. NOW Foods tests all products at multiple stages during production, to ensure raw materials, manufacturing facilities and finished products are unadulterated and free from mold, bacteria, heavy metals or other contaminants, and that the final product matches the ingredients and quantities listed on the label. All NOW Foods supplements are also tested and verified by an independent, third-party lab, to validate label claims, guarantee safety and quality, and ensure you're getting the cleanest supplement possible to fuel your active body—naturally.



HYDRATE:

drink, more than you think

Being well hydrated is critical for athletes, and adequate hydration can help you maximize performance and improve your ability to recover quickly. But when you exercise, you lose a significant amount of fluids through sweat, as well as through your lungs during increasing respiration. If they're not replaced, your body

can become dehydrated—with serious impacts on performance. Without adequate fluids, the volume of blood circulating through your body is decreased, reducing the amount of oxygen your muscles receive. Additionally, electrolytes—critical for fluid balance, muscle contractions and nerve function—are

depleted. Dehydration and lost electrolytes can cause muscle cramps, increased core temperature, weakness, fatigue and a general decline in performance. Even low levels of dehydration—as little as 2 percent of total body weight—can negatively affect athletic performance.

For peak performance, start workouts in a well-hydrated state, and stay hydrated. Keep a bottle handy during workouts and drink four ounces every 15 to 20 minutes; if you wait to drink until you're thirsty, you may already be dehydrated. To monitor fluid loss, weigh yourself before and after training, and drink 16 to 20 ounces for every pound lost during workouts. And make sure your beverage of choice does double-duty, replenishing lost fluids and also restoring electrolytes. Add an effervescent electrolyte tablet to bottled water, for a tasty way to increase energy, enhance performance and support recovery.

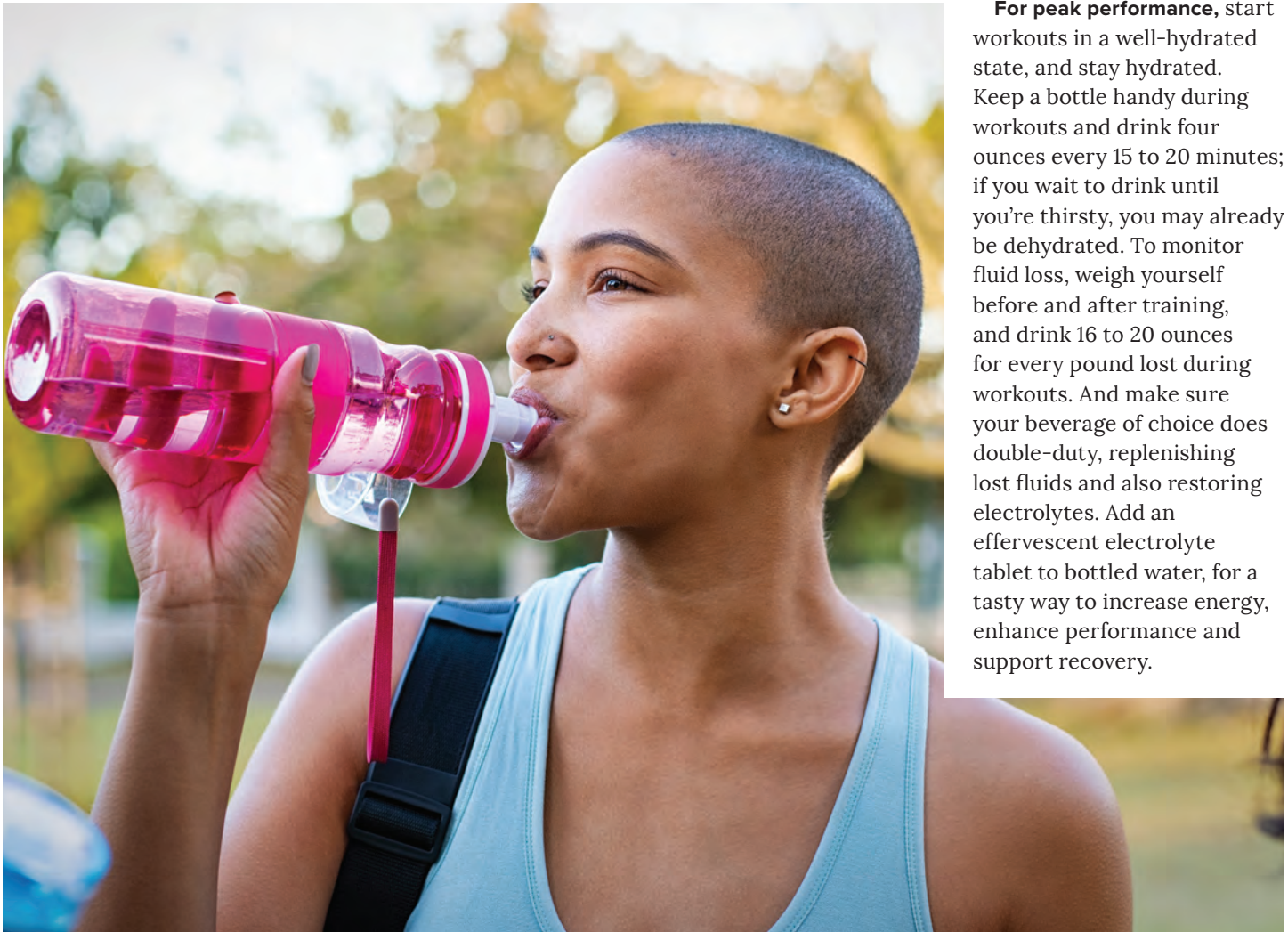


PHOTO BY RIDO/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

EAT TO WIN:

5 foods to enhance performance, build muscle and speed recovery

Whether you're a competitive athlete, weekend warrior or casual exerciser, certain foods can make your fitness routine more successful (and delicious). Boost performance, build muscle, lessen inflammation and speed recovery, with these 5 winning foods.

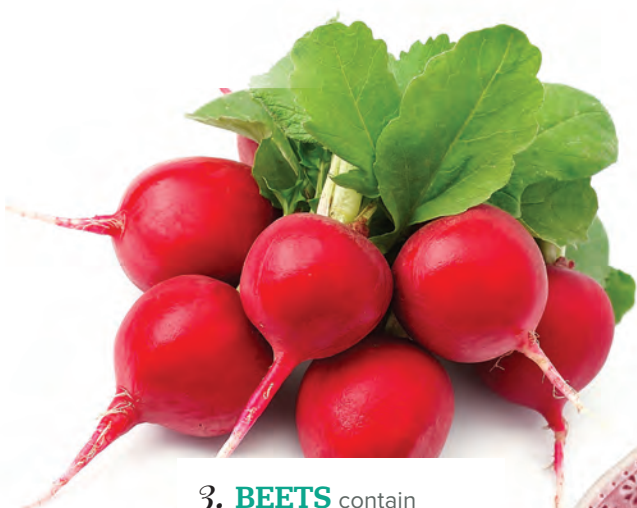
1. CHERRIES are rich in anthocyanins and other antioxidants that lower inflammation, lessen pain, reduce muscle damage and enhance strength recovery after exercise. In one review of 29 studies, consuming cherries reduced inflammation, muscle soreness and loss of strength in almost 89 percent of studies. Both tart (Montmorency) and sweet cherries have similar benefits.

2. EGGS are an excellent source of high-quality protein to repair muscle and speed recovery. They're also rich in leucine, an amino acid that helps promote lean muscle mass, and choline, a nutrient that may enhance weight loss without affecting muscle strength.

3. BEETS contain naturally occurring nitrates, which the body converts to nitric oxide—a compound that dilates blood vessels, improves blood flow and may enhance performance. In one study, athletes who drank beet juice showed a 38 percent increase in blood flow to muscles, especially fast-twitch muscles that impact bursts of speed and strength. And in a review of 23 studies, beet juice was found to improve cardiorespiratory endurance, exercise efficiency and performance, and delay time to fatigue.

4. HUMMUS is high in resistant starch, a slow-burning carbohydrate that controls spikes in blood glucose and insulin prior to exercise, and it's rich in protein and iron, essential for optimal athletic performance. Studies also show legumes help you feel fuller, longer, promoting fat loss and lean muscle mass.

5. POMEGRANATES are loaded with ellagitannins and other antioxidants that help minimize exercise-induced inflammation, alleviate muscle soreness and improve recovery. In one study, volunteers who drank pomegranate juice for 15 days reduced muscle soreness and weakness in their elbow flexors compared to a placebo.



CHERRIES BY OLGA STECKEL/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM; POMEGRANATE BY BAIBAZ/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM; BEETS BY VOLOSINA/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM; EGGS BY ALABASSZ/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM; HUMMUS BY MAMA_MIA/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



The Athlete's Life:

10 healthy habits to improve performance, reduce injuries and speed recovery

It's not just what you eat or take—it's how you live. Daily routines, from warming up to zen-ing out, can transform your workout and revitalize your training. Try these ten healthy habits, for optimum performance:

1. Warm Up. If you're in a rush to get started, you may be tempted to skip this vital step. Don't: warming up before working out reduces the risk of injuries by loosening joints and improving blood flow to muscles, and may reduce post-workout soreness. And warming up signals your brain to pay attention to your body, which can enhance coordination and improve technique. It doesn't have to be complicated: depending on your activity, simple, dynamic movements like jumping jacks, pushups, squats, lunges and hamstring stretches are good choices.



2. Cool down. After a workout, stretching while muscles are still warm helps reduce stiffness, increase flexibility and promote faster recovery. Spend 5 to 10 minutes after exercising on slower, gentler movements and stretches. Incorporate a foam roller a few times a week, to increase circulation, relax muscles and prompt the removal of lactic acid and other waste products.

3. Focus on that core. Yes, we all hate crunches and planks—but a strong core improves stability and can enhance speed and fluidity while reducing the risk of injury. Try simple crunches or dynamic planks—like alternating shoulder taps or doing planks on a stability ball. If you're new to ab workouts, look for online core classes taught by a qualified instructor to minimize the risk of back strain or injury.

4. Slow down. Racing through your workout increases the risk of injury, diminishing long-term ability. Plus, if you're in a rush, it's more likely you'll skip warming up and cooling down, leaving you even more vulnerable to muscle strains. Prioritize quality over quantity; if you're pressed for time, shorten your workout, focus on form and make every movement count.

5. Move, daily. Even on recovery days, include simple, gentle movement to boost circulation, reduce muscle stiffness, speed recovery and encourage relaxation. Plan active recovery days: good activities include relaxing walks, a leisurely swim, easy hip and core activation exercises, or an online yoga or tai chi class.

PHOTOBY MARIDAV/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

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6. Get a massage. It's not just a luxury; regular therapeutic massages support blood flow, promote the removal of wastes, reduce stress and boost mood. Plus, relaxing tense muscles can make you a better athlete; some studies suggest therapeutic massage may improve flexibility, shorten recovery time and enhance performance.

7. Listen to your body. Before you fling yourself into your exercise routine, take a few minutes to check in with your body. Are there any areas of tightness or pain? Is this a good day to scale back your regular workout, or dial it down to 70 percent? Paying attention to your physical body and respecting its messages lessens the chance of injury and improves performance in the long run.



8. Prioritize sleep. Sound, restful slumber is an essential part of any training program. During shut-eye, your body releases hormones, repairs muscles and consolidates memories, and if sleep is cut short, performance can suffer. Studies link sleep deprivation with impaired brain function that can affect judgment or decision-making during athletic performance. Lack of sleep also increases inflammation, impeding muscle recovery and repair. Most adults need seven to nine hours a night; competitive athletes or anyone with an intensive exercise regimen may need more. If you occasionally struggle with sleep, try **gentle supplements** to help you snooze soundly and wake up refreshed.*




9. Be consistent. If you're not a competitive athlete, it's easy to let a busy schedule edge out exercise. Make a commitment to stick to your goals. If a last-minute work deadline means a full session isn't feasible, squeeze in a condensed workout. Even 10 minutes a day reinforces the habit. And schedule workouts in the morning; if you put off exercising till the end of the day, you're more likely to blow it off.

10. Meditate. A daily mindfulness meditation practice reduces stress, relaxes muscles and promotes deep breathing—all of which help support your fitness goals. Meditation helps relieve stress and anxiety from physical training and competitive events, and studies suggest a regular mindfulness practice encourages flow state and mood, reduces negative thoughts, improves quality of sleep and can enhance performance. Establish a regular morning program that includes deep breathing exercises; if you're new to meditation, try an app like Headspace or Insight Timer.

EATING FOR ENDURANCE:

sports nutrition recipes

12 recipes to fuel your body, repair damage,
build muscle and improve recovery



Lemon Salmon Patties
with Sauce Verte
p. 24

Holy Omega Granola Bars

SERVES 20. HANDS-ON TIME: 15 MINUTES. TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR, 10 MINUTES.

- 1¼ cups** water
- ¼ cup** ground white chia seeds
- ¼ cup** organic golden flax seed meal
- 1 tbsp** sprouted brown rice protein powder
- 1 cup** NOW Real Food® Nuts About Berries™
- 1 cup** shredded unsweetened coconut
- 1 cup** rolled oats
- ½ cup** raw unsalted pine nuts
- ½ cup** agave nectar
- ¼ cup** NOW Real Food® Triple Omega Seed Mix™

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a rimmed, 13- by 9-inch baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. In large bowl, combine water, chia, flax and protein powder. Stir for 3 minutes, until mixture thickens to a gel-like consistency.

3. To bowl, add all remaining ingredients and mix until fully incorporated.

4. Spread mixture over prepared sheet, using a spatula to shape into a rectangle about ½-inch tall. Bake for 25 minutes, until lightly golden. Set aside to cool for 30 minutes, until firm but still soft to the touch.

5. Run a sharp knife along edges to loosen. Over a clean table or cutting board, flip baking sheet upside down and tap to release. Cut into 4 inch bars. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

PER SERVING (1 bar): Calories: 156, Total Fat: 9 g, Sat. Fat: 3 g, Carbs: 17 g, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 9 g, Protein: 4 g, Sodium: 5 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg



Power Greens Morning Shot

SERVES 1.

HANDS-ON TIME: **5 MINUTES.**

TOTAL TIME: **5 MINUTES.**

- ½ cup** water
- ½ cup** chopped kale
juice of 1 lemon
- 2 slices** fresh ginger
- 1 tbsp** apple cider vinegar
- 1 tsp** NOW® Sports L-Glutamine Powder
- 1 tsp** NOW® Organic Chlorella Powder
- 1 serving** NOW® Propolis Plus Extract
- Pinch** each ground cinnamon and ground cayenne pepper

To a blender, add all ingredients and blend until smooth.

PER SERVING (1 recipe): Calories: 29, Total Fat: 0 g, Sat. Fat: 0 g, Carbs: 6 g, Fiber: 0 g, Sugars: 1 g, Protein: 2 g, Sodium: 3 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg



Acai Flax Master Smoothie Bowl

SERVES 2. HANDS-ON TIME: **10 MINUTES.** TOTAL TIME: **10 MINUTES.**

- 1 cup** plain unsweetened almond milk
- 2 scoops** NOW® Sports Organic Pea Protein Creamy Vanilla
- 2 tbsp** acai powder
- 1 tbsp** organic flaxseed meal
- 1 tbsp** NOW® Nutty Infusions™ Roasted Almond Butter
- 1 tsp** flax oil
- ¼ cup** frozen blueberries
- 1 tbsp** unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 tbsp** hemp hearts

1. To a blender, add almond milk, protein powder, acai powder, flax, almond butter and flax oil; blend until smooth.

2. Pour into a bowl and top with blueberries, coconut and hemp hearts.

PER SERVING (½ of recipe): Calories: 405, Total Fat: 28 g, Sat. Fat: 5 g, Carbs: 23 g, Fiber: 11 g, Sugars: 7 g, Protein: 18 g, Sodium: 383 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg





Coconut Flax Crunch Bars

SERVES 24. HANDS-ON TIME: **15 MINUTES.** TOTAL TIME: **1 HOUR, 10 MINUTES.**

- ¼ cup** unsweetened mango slices
- ¼ cup** unsweetened papaya spears
- ¼ cup** unsweetened pineapple rings
- 2 tbsp** ground chia seeds
- 2 tbsp** organic golden flax seed meal
- 1 tbsp** sprouted brown rice protein powder
- ½ cup** brewed PomeGreenate™ Tea
- 1 cup** rolled oats
- 1 cup** all-purpose gluten-free flour
- ¾ cup** coconut sugar
- ½ cup** chopped macadamia nuts (dry roasted and salted)

- ½ cup** hemp hearts
- ½ tsp** each ground nutmeg and sea salt
- 1** banana
- ½ cup** safflower oil
- ¼ cup** pure maple syrup (Grade A)
- 1 tsp** pure vanilla extract

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a rimmed, 13- by 9-inch baking sheet with parchment paper.
- 2.** In large bowl, combine mango, papaya, pineapple, chia, flax and protein powder. Pour tea over mixture, stir well and set aside.
- 3.** In a separate bowl, combine oats, flour, coconut sugar, macadamia nuts, hemp hearts, nutmeg and salt.

- 4.** In another bowl, mash banana. Stir in oil, maple syrup and vanilla. Stir banana mixture into dried fruit mixture.
- 5.** Fold banana-dried fruit mixture into dry ingredients until fully incorporated.
- 6.** Spread mixture onto prepared sheet using a spatula to shape into a rectangle about ½-inch tall.
- 7.** Bake for 25 minutes. Allow to cool for 30 minutes, until firm but still soft to the touch.
- 8.** Run a sharp knife along edges to loosen. Over a clean table or cutting board, flip upside down, and tap to release. Cut into 4 inch bars. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

PER SERVING (1 bar): Calories: 179, Total Fat: 9 g, Sat. Fat: 1 g, Carbs: 23 g, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 13 g, Protein: 3 g, Sodium: 53 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg



MCT Coffee Whip

SERVES 1.
HANDS-ON TIME: 5 MINUTES.
TOTAL TIME: 5 MINUTES.

- 2½ **tblsp** NOW® Sports MCT Powder with Whey Protein, Salted Caramel
- 2 **tblsp** instant coffee
- 2 **tblsp** boiled water
- 1 **cup** plain unsweetened almond milk
- ½ **cup** ice

1. In a bowl, combine MCT, coffee and water; whisk for 2 to 5 minutes or until desired texture is reached.

2. In a glass, add almond milk over ice. Pour MCT mixture overtop.

PER SERVING (1 recipe): Calories: 159, Total Fat: 11 g, Sat. Fat: 9 g, Carbs: 11 g, Fiber: 1 g, Sugars: 2 g, Protein: 3 g, Sodium: 332 mg, Cholesterol: 5 mg

Sweet Cherry Cilantro Salsa

MAKES 2 CUPS. HANDS-ON TIME: 5 MINUTES. TOTAL TIME: 15 MINUTES.

- 2 **cups** pitted and diced dark sweet cherries
- ¼ **cup** finely chopped fresh cilantro
- ¼ **cup** minced red onion
- 1 jalapeño chile pepper, seeded and minced
- Zest** and juice of ½ lemon
- 1 **tblsp** pure maple syrup
- 2 **tsp** puréed fresh ginger
- ¼ **tsp** sea salt
- Ground black pepper, to taste

To a medium bowl, add all ingredients and mix until fully incorporated. Refrigerate for 10 minutes to let the flavors come together.

PER SERVING (¼ cup): Calories: 35, Total Fat: 0 g, Saturated Fat: 0 g, Carbs: 9 g, Fiber: 1 g, Sugars: 7 g, Protein: 0.5 g, Sodium: 61 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg



Lemon Salmon Patties with Sauce Verte

SERVES 6. HANDS-ON TIME: 45 MINUTES. TOTAL TIME: 45 MINUTES.

PATTIES

- 2 tbsp** avocado oil, divided
+ additional for cooking
- 1 lb** wild salmon fillet,
skin removed*
- 1¼ tsp** sea salt, divided
- ½ tsp** ground black
pepper, divided
- 2** shallots, minced
- 2 stalks** celery, minced
- 2 cloves** garlic, minced
- ¾ cup** almond flour
- 2 tbsp** arrowroot powder
- 1 large** egg
- 1 tbsp** lemon zest + 2 tbsp
fresh lemon juice

SAUCE

- ¼ cup** extra-virgin olive oil
- 1** shallot, minced
- 1 tbsp** fresh lemon juice
- 2 tbsp** capers
- 2** oil-packed anchovy fillets
- ¼ cup** fresh flat-leaf
parsley leaves
- 1 tbsp** Dijon mustard
- ground black pepper,
to taste

1. Preheat oven to 425°F; line a baking dish with parchment. Rub 1 tbsp avocado oil over salmon and season with ¼ tsp each salt and pepper. Place salmon on baking sheet. Roast until cooked through, 12 to 14 minutes. Set aside to cool. Reduce oven temperature to 200°F.

2. In a small skillet on medium, heat 1 tbsp avocado oil. Add 2 minced shallots, celery, garlic and ¼ tsp salt. Sauté until celery is tender and veggies are fragrant, about 5 minutes; transfer to a large bowl.

3. Meanwhile, make sauce: In a small skillet, combine olive oil and 1 minced shallot; place over low heat and cook until shallot sizzles. Sauté 1 minute, then transfer to a food processor. Add 1 tbsp lemon juice, caper, anchovies, parsley and Dijon. Season with pepper; set aside.

4. Flake salmon into bowl with shallot mixture. Add almond flour, arrowroot, egg, lemon zest and juice, remaining ¾ tsp salt and remaining ¼ tsp pepper. Stir well, mashing with a fork. Scoop ¼ cup mixture; form into a 2½-inch round patty. Repeat to make 12 patties total.

5. In a large nonstick skillet on medium, heat ¼ inch avocado oil. Working in batches, cook patties until golden and cooked through, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Place a wire rack over baking sheet. After cooking, transfer patties to rack; keep warm in oven while you cook remaining patties. Serve with sauce.

*Don't toss that salmon skin! Cut it into strips, rub with avocado oil, season with salt and pepper and roast at 450°F until crisp and starting to brown, about 10 minutes. Use it instead of bacon in a BLT, chop it into "croutons" for salad or just crunch on it as a snack.

PER SERVING (2 patties with sauce):
Calories: 403, Total Fat: 32 g, Sat. Fat: 4 g,
Monounsaturated Fat: 21 g, Polyunsaturated
Fat: 5 g, Carbs: 10 g, Fiber: 3 g, Sugars: 2 g,
Protein: 20 g, Sodium: 639 mg, Cholesterol: 67 mg



PHOTO BY ASHLEY GAPP



Asian Chicken Salad

SERVES 6. HANDS-ON TIME: 40 MINUTES. TOTAL TIME: 40 MINUTES.

DRESSING

- ¼ cup** avocado oil
- 3 cloves** garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp** minced fresh ginger
- 2** green onions, white and light green parts, sliced
- ¼ cup** fresh lime juice
- ⅓ cup** smooth almond butter
- 3 tbsp** coconut aminos
- 1 tbsp** toasted sesame oil
- 1 tsp** sea salt
- ½ tsp** ground black pepper

SALAD

- 5 cups** shredded napa cabbage
- 2** carrots, shredded
- 1** red bell pepper, cut into thin strips
- 2 stalks** celery, sliced
- 1** rotisserie chicken, meat removed and shredded
- 1** avocado, peeled, pitted and diced
- 3 tbsp** sliced unsalted almonds, toasted
- 3 tbsp** chopped fresh cilantro
- sriracha, optional

1. Prepare dressing: In a small skillet, combine oil, garlic, ginger and onions; place over low heat and cook until mixture sizzles. Sauté 30 seconds, then transfer to a small food processor. Add remaining dressing ingredients plus 1 to 2 tbsp water; process until smooth.

2. In a large bowl, combine cabbage, carrots, bell pepper, celery and chicken. Add ½ cup dressing; toss to coat. If desired, add more dressing and toss again. Divide among plates; top with avocado, almonds and cilantro. Serve sriracha on the side.

PER SERVING (¼ of recipe): Calories: 439, Total Fat: 39 g, Sat. Fat: 6 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 21 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 8 g, Carbs: 18 g, Fiber: 6 g, Sugars: 6 g, Protein: 21 g, Sodium: 874 mg, Cholesterol: 55 mg

Quinoa & Roasted Vegetable Salad with Yogurt Sauce

SERVES 6. HANDS-ON TIME: 45 MINUTES. TOTAL TIME: 55 MINUTES.

5 carrots, sliced ¼ inch thick diagonally	1½ cups low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
1 fennel bulb, trimmed, cut into thin wedges	½ cup full-fat plain yogurt
2 tbsp avocado oil, divided	1 tsp grated lemon zest + 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
1 tsp each sea salt and ground black pepper, divided	2 tbsp chopped roasted, salted pistachios
1 lb beets, trimmed, peeled, cut into ½-inch cubes	2 tbsp chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
3 cloves garlic, unpeeled	
5 sprigs fresh thyme, divided	1. Preheat oven to 425°F; place 2 large baking sheets in oven as it preheats. In a large bowl, combine carrots, fennel, 1 tbsp oil and ½ tsp
¾ cup quinoa, rinsed	

each salt and pepper; toss to coat. In a separate bowl, place beets, garlic, 2 tsp oil and ¼ tsp each salt and pepper; toss to coat.

2. Remove one hot baking sheet from oven. Spread carrot-fennel mixture on sheet in a single layer and tuck 3 thyme springs among vegetables; return to oven and remove other hot baking sheet. Spread beets and garlic on baking sheet and tuck 2 thyme springs among vegetables. Return baking sheet to oven and roast vegetables, rotating sheets and stirring once or twice, until tender, 35 to 40 minutes. Remove baking sheets from oven and set aside to cool.

3. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan on medium-high, heat remaining 1 tsp oil. Add quinoa and ⅛ tsp each salt and pepper. Cook and stir until quinoa is lightly toasted, about 2 minutes. Add broth and bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low, cover and cook 15 minutes without stirring. Tilt pan; if water remains, cover and cook quinoa 3 minutes more. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, for 5 minutes. Transfer quinoa to a large bowl and let cool slightly. Add carrot-fennel mixture and toss.

4. When garlic cloves are cool enough to handle, squeeze garlic out of peels into a small bowl; mash with a fork. Stir in yogurt, lemon zest and lemon juice, remaining ⅛ tsp salt and ⅛ tsp pepper.

5. Spread 2 tbsp yogurt sauce on each of 4 plates. Divide quinoa mixture among plates; top with beets, pistachios and parsley.

PER SERVING (¼ of recipe): Calories: 314, Total Fat: 12 g, Sat. Fat: 2 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 7 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 3 g, Carbs: 44 g, Fiber: 9 g, Sugars: 14 g, Protein: 9 g, Sodium: 705 mg, Cholesterol: 4 mg



Sheet-Pan Steak Fajitas

SERVES 4. HANDS-ON TIME: 30 MINUTES. TOTAL TIME: 55 MINUTES.*

*PLUS MARINATING TIME.

FAJITAS

- ¼ cup** avocado oil
- 2 tbsp** coconut aminos
- 1 tbsp** fresh lime juice
- 1 tsp** each ground cumin, garlic powder and sea salt
- ½ tsp** chipotle chile powder
- ¼ tsp** ground black pepper
- 1 lb** skirt steak, patted dry
- 1** red onion, sliced into ¼-inch strips
- 3** bell peppers (any color), sliced into ½-inch strips

- 1 small** jalapeño chile pepper, seeded and sliced crosswise
- 8** grain-free or corn tortillas (**TRY:** Siete Family Foods Cassava & Chia Tortillas)

CREMA

- ½ cup** full-fat sour cream
- ½ tsp** chipotle chile powder
- ½ tsp** lime zest + 2 tbsp fresh lime juice
- ¼ tsp** coconut aminos
- ⅛ tsp** sea salt

1. Prepare fajitas: In a glass baking dish, whisk together oil, coconut aminos, lime juice, cumin, garlic powder, salt, chile powder and pepper. Transfer half of mixture to a bowl; set aside. Add steak to dish, turning to coat. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour, or up to 4 hours.

2. Meanwhile, prepare crema: In a bowl, whisk together all crema ingredients; cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

3. To bowl with reserved oil mixture, add onion, bell pepper and jalapeño; toss to coat.

4. Arrange one oven rack in upper third and another rack in lower third of oven. Preheat broiler to high. Place a large baking sheet on upper rack. When hot, remove steak from marinade and place on sheet, discarding marinade. Broil 4 minutes, flip, and broil 3 to 5 minutes more, to desired doneness. Transfer to a plate and tent with foil; rest 10 minutes. Wipe sheet and return to oven.

5. Wrap tortillas in foil. Place on lower oven rack to warm. Spread vegetable strips on hot baking sheet; broil 5 to 7 minutes, stirring once, until softened. Slice steak into strips. Divide steak and vegetables among plates; serve with tortillas and crema.

PER SERVING (2 fajitas): Calories: 434, Total Fat: 20 g, Sat. Fat: 8 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 9 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 2 g, Carbs: 37 g, Fiber: 7 g, Sugars: 7 g, Protein: 27 g, Sodium: 586 mg, Cholesterol: 82 mg



PHOTO BY ASHLEY CAPP



Spinach-Feta Pie

with Sweet Potato Crust

SERVES 6.

HANDS-ON TIME: 30 MINUTES.

TOTAL TIME: 1 HOUR, 15 MINUTES.

- 12 oz** sweet potatoes (1 large or 2 small), peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp** avocado oil
- 1** yellow onion, diced
- ¾ tsp** sea salt, divided
- 2 cloves** garlic, minced
- 5 cups** loosely packed baby spinach
- ¼ tsp** ground black pepper, divided
- 4 large** eggs
- ½ cup** full-fat ricotta cheese
- 1½ tsp** dried dill (or use about 1½ tbsp chopped fresh dill and garnish with dill fronds)
- 4 oz** crumbled full-fat feta cheese

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Mist a 9-inch pie plate with cooking spray. Place a layer of sweet potato slices over bottom and up sides of pie plate. Mist sweet potatoes with cooking spray and add remaining sweet potato slices, filling in any gaps; mist again with cooking spray. Bake until sweet potatoes are tender, 13 to 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F.



2. In a large skillet on medium, heat oil. Add onion and ⅛ tsp salt; sauté until tender, 5 minutes. Add garlic; sauté 1 minute, until fragrant. Add spinach, one large handful at a time, cooking and stirring until it wilts before adding more. Season with ⅛ tsp each salt and pepper. Continue to cook until all spinach has wilted and liquid has cooked off, about 3 minutes. Spread mixture evenly over sweet potato slices in pie plate.

3. In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, ricotta, dill, remaining ½ tsp salt and remaining ⅛ tsp pepper.

Pour over spinach mixture. Sprinkle feta over top. Bake until eggs have set, about 25 minutes. (**NOTE:** Check after 25 minutes by cutting a small slit into center with a paring knife. If eggs are still runny, continue baking until cooked through, checking every 2 minutes.) Let pie cool 5 minutes before cutting into wedges.

PER SERVING (¼ of recipe): Calories: 225, Fat: 15 g, Sat. Fat: 6 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 6 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 2 g, Carbs: 12 g, Fiber: 2 g, Sugars: 4 g, Protein: 11 g, Sodium: 510 mg, Cholesterol: 151 mg

Easiest-Ever Spinach & Beet Salad

SERVES **1**. HANDS-ON TME: **10 MINUTES**. TOTAL TIME: **10 MINUTES**.

SALAD

- 3 cups** baby spinach
- 1 cup** chopped cooked beets (**TIP:** Roast your own or look for pre-cooked, vacuum-packed beets at your local store.)

- ½ cup** cooked or BPA-free canned chickpeas
- 2 tbsp** extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp** balsamic vinegar
- Pinch** each sea salt and ground black pepper
- ¼ cup** raw unsalted walnuts

In a bowl, toss together spinach, beets and chickpeas. In a small bowl, combine oil, vinegar, salt and pepper. Drizzle dressing over salad and top with walnuts.

PER SERVING (1 recipe): Calories: 434, Total Fat: 47 g, Sat. Fat: 6 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 24 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 15 g, Carbs: 42 g, Fiber: 13 g, Sugars: 17 g, Protein: 15 g, Sodium: 866 mg, Cholesterol: 0 mg



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