

Eating the right foods after workout should be your number one goal

Written by Administrator

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The post workout meal (the meal you eat after a workout) is probably the most important meal of the day for anyone who is into nutrition and fitness. However, in a lot of cases this importance also leads to confusion. Maybe it's because of the many ready-made shakes available. Maybe it's the trouble with fitting it in with the rest of your diet. Maybe it's just generally not knowing whether you should even eat anything after you've worked out. Whatever it is, something about it confuses people.

The truth is, once you understand the basics of what nutrients your body needs and doesn't need after your workout, and what the best sources are to get this nutrition from, the post workout meal will probably become the most simple and quick meal of your day. And, luckily for you, I just so happen to be explaining all of this information in this very article.

What you should and should NOT eat after a workout.

Simply put, aside from water (which you should already know you need) your post workout meal needs to contain 2 things, and it needs to not contain 1. You should be eating protein and

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carbs. You should NOT be eating fat. More on the protein and carbs you need a little later. First, let's start with a quick explanation of why you shouldn't eat fat after a workout.

Many times throughout this website I explain why fat is NOT a bad thing (when it's the "good" fat) and why it is an important part of everyone's diet. However, there just happens to be a certain time when fat (good or bad) wouldn't be good to eat. This of course is in the post workout meal. Simply put, fat slows down digestion. In this case, it would be slowing down the digestion of protein and carbs. This, as you're about to find out, is the exact opposite of what you want to happen.

At this point you should really have just 3 questions about your post workout meal:

1 - How soon should I eat it?

2 - How much protein and how many carbs should I eat?

3 - What foods should the protein and carbs be coming from?

Hey, what a coincidence, here comes the answers to all of those questions...

How long after my workout should I eat my post workout meal?

Soon... really soon. As soon as you can. I don't mean put-down-the-dumbbells-and-start-eating. It doesn't need to be quite that soon. However, there is this "window of time" that exists after your workout during which it would be the most beneficial for your body to receive it's post workout nutrition. Typically you'd want to try to get this meal into your body within 1 hour. If possible, within 30 minutes would be even better. I personally have my post workout meal about 5-10 minutes after my workout. What's that you say? How can I do it so fast if I'm at the gym? Don't worry, more on that later.

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Post Workout Protein

Now that you know that time is of the essence when it comes to your post workout meal, this part is going to make a whole lot of sense. See, eating this meal soon after a workout is important, but just because you are putting the food into your body quickly doesn't actually mean the food is being digested and used by your body equally as quick. While egg whites, chicken and tuna fish are fine sources of protein that I personally eat daily, they aren't the ideal type of protein for the meal after your workout.

These foods are whole foods, and the protein in whole foods digest pretty slowly. You may have eaten a high protein food in your post workout meal, but by the time the protein is digested and finally ready to be used by your body, a whole lot of time would have passed. This is why the ideal source of protein to eat after your workout is a whey protein powder mixed with some type of liquid thus creating a whey protein shake.

A whey protein shake will be digested by your body much quicker than a whole food because it will be a liquid. And, not to mention, whey protein is the fastest digesting protein there is. This is what makes whey protein pretty much the official choice of most people as their post workout meal protein source. As for how much, try to consume between 0.15-0.25 grams of protein per pound of your body weight (so a 175lb person would shoot for between 26-43 grams at this time).