



## FACT SHEET

### FOOD FOR YOUR SPORT - DIVING

#### ABOUT DIVING

Diving is separated into many events, including:

- Springboard (1m and 3m)
- Platform (5m, 7m and 10m)
- Synchronised events for both men and women

Competitions may last for up to 6 days with preliminary rounds typically held in the morning with finals the same night. Up to 11 dives may be required which must be performed including numerous combinations of starting positions, flight movements and twists which determine the degree of difficulty.

Depending on the level of the athlete training sessions may range from one session per week to multiple sessions in a day. These may cover water work, dry land training and weight training. A divers' training focuses more on skill and technique rather than kilojoule-burning aerobic exercise.

Diving requires the athlete to be small, lean and well-muscled. This body composition provides physical advantages including better mechanical efficiency, increased power-to-weight ratio and a favourable image to diving judges.

#### TRAINING DIET

Some divers miss breakfast before early morning training sessions for stomach comfort. Divers should aim to consume breakfast prior to training to maximise performance. Liquid options (e.g. Sustagen Sport tetra packs) are ideal for fuel and stomach comfort. Busy schedules (e.g. work, school, uni, etc) need to be considered and meals and snacks may have to be organised for eating "on the run". Nutrient-rich foods need to be selected to provide adequate carbohydrate, protein and other nutrients for fuel and tissue repair.

#### FLUID NEEDS

A diver's training and competition environment on the pool deck is often warm and humid, and can increase fluid loss from the body. Water should be consumed regularly during competition, dry land and pool training as dehydration can be detrimental to a diver's performance as it affects concentration and skill level. Sports drinks are suitable fluids during long training sessions (more than ~90 minutes) or if training for maximum performance and are ideal during competition as they provide electrolytes and carbohydrate along with fluid in between dives.

#### WHAT SHOULD I EAT BEFORE COMPETITION

Divers should have a small, high-carbohydrate snack about 1-2 hours prior to competition, and include a drink of water or sports drink. To avoid stomach discomfort, foods low in fibre and fat can be preferred. Ensure that the meal is well planned and includes familiar foods and fluids. Examples include:

- Breakfast cereal + low fat milk
- Fruit salad + low fat yoghurt
- English muffin or crumpet with jam/honey
- Sandwich/roll + salad + lean meat/cheese
- Banana + tetra pack flavoured milk

If nervous pre-event and appetite is a problem, carbohydrate-rich fluids can be an alternative, such as:

- Sports drinks or juice
- Low fat milk or smoothie
- Liquid meal replacement (e.g. Sustagen® Sport)

#### WHAT SHOULD I EAT DURING COMPETITION

Divers need to ensure that they take advantage of opportunities to eat and drink between dives, especially on long days. Divers should develop an eating plan that fits in with their competition schedule and includes familiar foods that will not affect their performance. Practising competition eating during training sessions will help to identify food choices that will suit them best. Light or liquid based options can help avoid stomach upset from flips and turns.

Examples include:

- Sandwiches with light fillings (honey/jam/banana)
- Low-fat yoghurt tubs
- Muesli bars
- Tetra packs of flavoured milk or a fruit smoothie
- Sports drink

#### WHAT ABOUT RECOVERY

It is very important to refuel with carbohydrate-rich foods during recovery in order to begin replenishing muscle glycogen stores for training/competition. This is especially important during a competition that is held over a few days or during heavy training blocks. It is also important to include a lean protein source in recovery for muscle tissue repair and growth.



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Recovery meals and snacks should contain carbohydrates, protein.

For example:

- Tuna, cheese and salad sandwich
- Bowl of cereal with fruit and yoghurt
- Rice with low fat chicken curry
- Baked potato with lean mince topping
- Lean beef lasagne with side salad

Fluids (mainly water) should also be consumed with the post competition meal to ensure adequate rehydration

### OTHER NUTRITION TIPS

- Be organised! Have suitable transportable snacks on hand for pre and post training/competition. (e.g. cereal bars, fruit, low-fat yoghurt, low-fat muffins and sandwiches)
- Frequent sips of water and/or sports drinks during dives is a good strategy for maintaining hydration.
- Low body fat levels are advantageous in diving, for agility, dynamic power and technique. Body fat levels can creep up due to injury or time off from training, or if dietary intake is not in line with training requirements. This can be managed by consulting An Accredited Sports dietitian or trying some of these tips below:
  - o Avoid extreme hunger – a small, well-timed snack will prevent you from over-eating later on
  - o Eat slowly: give your body time to register fullness
  - o Fill up on high- fibre foods – enjoy these regularly in meals and snacks
  - o Drink water before and during your meal
  - o Watch high-energy fluids such as juice, cordial and soft drink: these can be an easy way to consuming extra (unnecessary) calories
  - o Limit saturated fat, alcohol and sugar
  - o Find non-food ways of rewarding yourself for reaching training goals
- Energy requirements during competition are usually less than during training so match your eating to your training to avoid weight gain.

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