

## The Importance of Nutrition & Hydration

Even though the focus on the importance of nutrition is certainly nothing new, many of the top causes of death remain directly related to the way we eat. Proper nutrition is essential to healthy living and is particularly important when looking to maximize the benefits of athletic exercise.

A key component to the success of any workout program—not to mention a healthy lifestyle—is achieving the right combination of the basic nutritional elements: carbohydrates, fats and proteins. While each element plays a vital role, the importance of protein is often overlooked. It is the critical building block which fuels the regeneration and growth of lean muscle—which should be one of the main goals of any exercise program.

One of the main benefits to an active lifestyle is that you will achieve your goals by actually speeding your metabolism up, and not just by restricting the amount of food you eat. By concentrating on the quality as well as the variety of our food sources, we can achieve our goals without under nourishing ourselves. Eating a proper variety of healthy foods will also ensure that the range of essential vitamins and minerals are properly delivered via natural sources.

Proper hydration is also an important part of healthy living that takes on added significance as activity levels are increased. Water is essential to almost every process the body carries out, from the distribution of nutrients, electrolytes and hormones to the removal of various toxins and the regulation of body temperature. The body's need for water (thirst) is very often mistaken for hunger. Ensuring adequate hydration not only reduces fatigue but can also alleviate misleading hunger pangs.