

# EATING BETTER TO PROVIDE ENERGY DURING ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

*This is general sports nutrition information that may be useful when planning what to eat during race day and/or before practices. Please use this information as a guideline*

**Important note:** *Don't make race day the first time you try new food. Each child is different, so try a few different things before the swim meet and during practices will help you figure out what food your child likes and digests well. Always consult with your child's physician to discuss the best nutritional selection if you have any concerns and especially if your child has diabetes or any other unique nutrition requirements.*

*If you would like to read more, the information provided below was obtained from the website <http://sportsmedicine.about.com>*

*- Coach Marcelo Oliver, Hurricane Swim Team*

## **Sports Nutrition - Carbohydrate - Carbs**

Carbohydrate is arguably the most important source of energy for athletes, carbs provide the energy that fuels muscle contractions. Once eaten, carbohydrates breakdown into smaller sugars (glucose, fructose and galactose) that get absorbed and used as energy. The food an athlete eats before, during and after a workout is important for both comfort and performance during exercise.

### **LUNCH BEFORE THE SWIM MEET:**

Eat Lunch between noon to 1pm on race day. Some good foods to choose from are:

- Fresh fruit
- Bread, bagels
- Pasta dishes
- Baked potatoes
- Energy bar
- Cereal with milk
- Yogurt
- Toast/bread with a bit of peanut butter, lean meat, or cheese
- Peanut butter & jelly sandwich
- Drink water

### **AFTERNOON SNACK:**

If you need a snack between lunch and getting to the pool:

- Fresh fruits
- Bread, bagels
- pasta
- Yogurt
- water

### **AT THE SWIM MEET:**

After warm up and during the swim meet good energy source snacks are:

- fresh fruit such as apples, watermelon, peaches, grapes, or oranges
- Fruit Juice (apple juice, grape juice)
- sports drink (gatorade, Powerade)
- Energy bars (Power bars)

### **AVOID: Foods to Avoid Before and During Exercise**

Foods with a lot of fat, fiber or dairy can be very difficult and slow to digest and remain in the stomach a long time. They also will pull blood into the stomach to aid in digestion (away from working muscles), which can cause cramping and discomfort. Foods to avoid include: Meats, doughnuts, fries, potato chips, pizza, and chocolate candy bars.