

Snacks for Gymnasts

Here are some amazing snacks for athletes to eat before, during, and after their workouts. The information below was taken from [Gymnast Care's](#) website and written by Dr. Joshua Eldridge. He recommends these snacks to help decrease injury and increase performance!

These are great snacks for you to pack for your kids, or pick up at JAG!

Mid-Workout Snack Examples

1. Fresh Fruit

Some great options are:

- Bananas
- Apples
- Pears
- Oranges

Dr. Eldridge says, "We eat fruit in the gym during our mid-workout snack because it is easily absorbed and provides instant energy for our gymnasts. This gives them the kick they need to make it through the last 2 hours of practice."

2. Frozen Fruit Bars

According to Dr. Eldridge, this is a perfect option for those gymnasts who don't like to eat fresh fruit. He says that "the most important thing here is to make sure you get ones that have real fruit with no high fructose corn syrup. Having sugar in the bars isn't necessarily bad for a gymnast getting ready to practice hard for another 2 hours. We just want to make sure most of the sugar is found in the fruit and not a high fructose blend."

3. Apple Sauce

Dr. Eldridge recommends avoiding apple sauce with lots of additives and added sugar, but instead to reach for straight applesauce or applesauce flavored with cinnamon.

Liquid Snacks for During Practice

According to Dr. Eldridge, "It's been proven that switching from pure water to a carbohydrate drink during intermittent work (gymnastics style where athletes work hard for a short period of time and then rest) has been proven to increase an athlete's capacity for work by 33%. WOW! Can anyone tell me why we wouldn't want to take advantage of this?"

4. Juice

5. Gatorade, Powerade, or a Similar Drink

Dr. Eldridge says that you should avoid the sugar-free versions of these drinks as they strip the drinks of their beneficial 6% carbohydrate balance. He states, the 6% carbohydrate formulation

is "the preferred amount of carbohydrates to help increase performance by your athlete" and "Both the juice and the Gatorade should be kept for practice only. When your gymnast is outside the gym, water should be the drink of choice!"

Pre-Workout Snack Examples

What types of foods and when should your gymnast consume prior to practice? According to Dr. Eldridge, "Pre-workout snacks need to be eaten 30-60 minutes before practice and be well balanced with a higher concentration of carbohydrates. Remember, our young gymnast's bodies run on carbohydrates and we need to have these readily available for them during practice."

6. Aussie Bites from Costco

These snacks have dried fruit, rasin, and Omega 3s. Dr. Eldridge recommends eating a couple before practice as well as after practice if you have a long drive home.

7. Z Bars from Cliff Bar

8. Sargento String Cheese and Fruit

Dr. Eldridge says, "String cheese gives a great source of protein and fats, and the fruit helps to give our gymnasts the needed carbohydrates to make it through practice."

Post-Workout Snacks

According to Dr. Eldridge, "Many of our athletes can't make it home within the optimal 'hour after practice' to eat dinner, so they need something to feed their muscles while they wait to get home. They don't need a meal, but they do need something with a good source of protein, and carbohydrates."

9. Yogurt and Granola

Dr. Eldridge says, "If we're talking about yogurt that can really boost that recovery, we recommend going with greek yogurt. Greek Gods Honey Flavored Yogurt gives an awesome 250 calories with a great mixture of fat, carbs, and proteins. Going with a light or non-fat yogurt robs your athlete of not only the extra calories they need to recover, but it also removes most of the fat which is needed for recover."

10. Trail Mix

A great source of protein and dried fruits.

You can read the original post on the [Gymnast Care](#) website!