



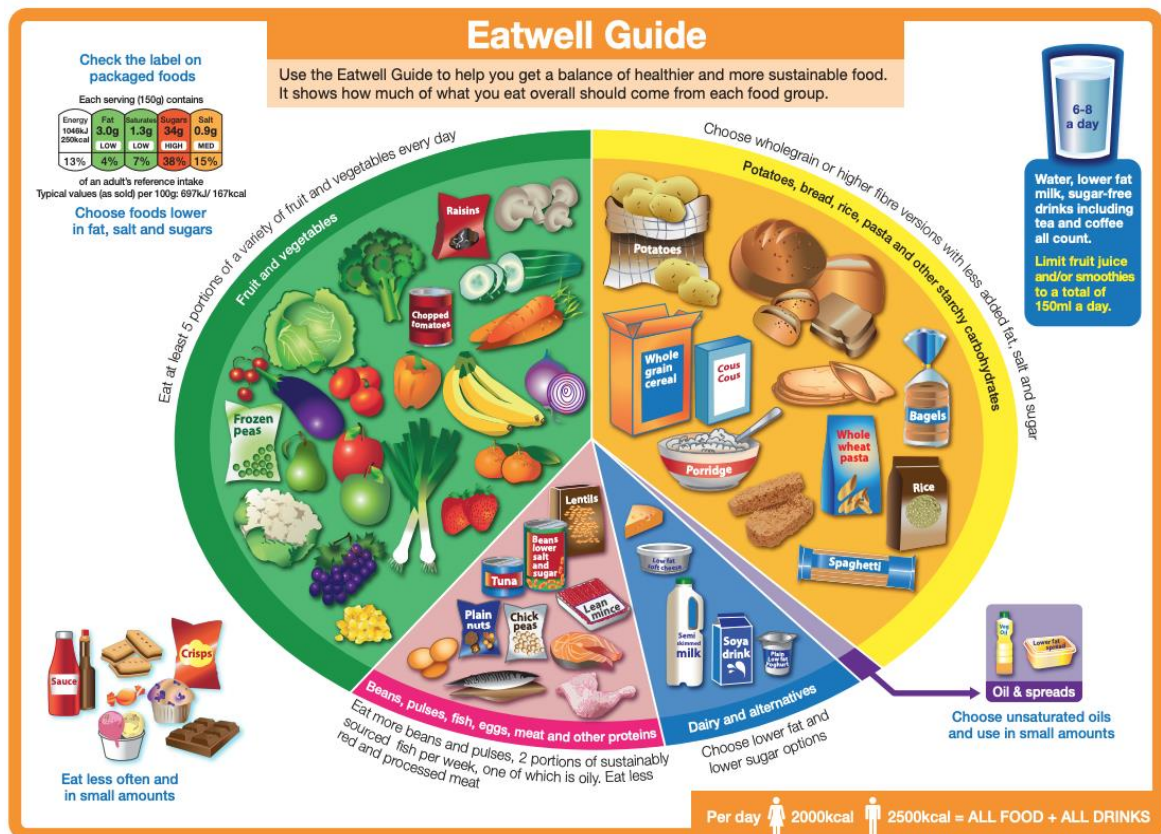
# **GOOD DIET FACTSHEET**

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# 1. The Importance of Good Diet

Healthy eating and good nutrition are a vital part of any athlete's training programme and at TD we encourage all swimmers to eat a healthy, nutritious diet as far as is possible.

Please see the Eatwell Guide below. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group:



Some examples of foods to eat after training for recovery might include:

- low fat milkshake
- fruit smoothie made with milk/ yoghurt
- pint of milk and cereal bar or banana
- total Greek yoghurt and fruit
- bowl of cereal with milk
- scrambled egg on toast
- tuna sandwich



Similarly, whilst at competitions it is important to plan out what food you will need for the day to avoid swimmers becoming dehydrated and tired between swims. Sufficient healthy snacks and nutritious foods in lunch boxes are recommended.

## **2. Competitions: Diet Advice from British Swimming**

When preparing to compete at a swimming competition you need to pay careful attention to what you eat. See below to find out what to eat the day before the event and during the day.

### **THE DAY BEFORE**

When competition time comes around, you'll have plenty on your mind already. So, the day before the event, eat meals and snacks high in complex carbohydrates. You need to keep those glycogen stores topped up.

- Drink fluids little and often to stay properly hydrated.
- Eat little and often – every two to four hours to keep your blood sugar levels steady and fuel your muscles in preparation for your event.
- Avoid big meals or over-eating in the evening – this will almost certainly make you feel uncomfortable and lethargic the next day.
- Try to stick to familiar foods. Curries, spicy foods, baked beans and pulses (unless you are used to eating them) can cause gas and bloating, so avoid eating anything that may cause stomach discomfort the next day. It's best to stick to foods that you are familiar and compatible with!

### **THE MORNING OF THE EVENT**

- Don't swim on empty. Even if you feel nervous, make breakfast happen. Stick to easily digested foods – cereal with milk, porridge, banana with yoghurt, some fruit or toast with jam. If you're really struggling, try liquid meals such as milkshakes, yoghurt drinks or a smoothie.
- It's a good idea to rehearse your competition meal routine in training so you know exactly what agrees with you.

### **SNACKS BETWEEN HEATS**

- Try to eat as soon as possible after your swim to give yourself as long as possible to recover if you have to swim again.
- High fat and simple sugar foods will do you no favours in competition – instead search out the complex carbohydrates again.
- If you can't stomach anything solid try sports drinks, flavoured milk or diluted juice that will help replenish your energy supplies and assist the recovery of aching muscles.

The list below offers great food options to be snacking on in and around training for a competition. Remember to keep eating healthy foods from your regular diet though, such as fresh vegetables, nuts and fruits.

Here are some more you can try:

- Water, diluted fruit juice with a pinch of salt or a sports drink
- Pasta salad
- Plain sandwiches e.g. chicken, tuna, cheese with salad, banana, peanut butter
- Bananas, grapes, apples, plums, pears
- Dried fruit e.g. raisins, apricots, mango
- Smoothies
- Crackers and rice cakes with bananas and/or honey

- Mini-pancakes, fruit buns
- Cereal bars, fruit bars, sesame snaps
- Yoghurt and yoghurt drinks
- Small bags of unsalted nuts e.g. peanuts, cashews, almonds
- Prepared vegetables e.g. carrots, peppers, cucumber and celery

## **DRINKS**

This is very important! During a one hour training session a great deal of fluid can be lost from the body. To compensate for this, 1 litre of fluid per training hour should be available to the swimmer. Drinking prior to a training session is vital. During a competition the swimmer should be careful not to dehydrate.

Swimming pool surrounds are notorious for being hot and sometimes unbearably so. During the day, drink should be taken little and often. Headaches, dizziness and nausea are some of the symptoms of the onset of dehydration.

**WHENEVER YOU ARE DOING PHYSICAL EXERCISE HAVE YOUR DRINKS BOTTLE CLOSE AT HAND. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A RESERVE SUPPLY IN YOUR BAG.**

Water is the best fluid to drink – **NO** fizzy drinks or high sugar sports drinks are allowed during training sessions unless recommended by a doctor.

You will find many helpful tips for breakfast ideas, meals for dinner, lunch box items, etc. on the internet e.g. <https://www.swimming.org/sport/swim-parents-advice/young-swimmer-nutrition/>