



CROSSFIT WORKOUTS AND NUTRITION TIMING



TIMING GOALS

Improve recovery between workouts

Promote and support training adaptations

Reduce muscle tissue damage

Support & improve the overall training quality (volume and or intensity)

Decrease fatigue during workouts

Support immune system



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PRE

1-4 hours before training

The goal here is to make sure muscle and liver glycogen stores are topped off. This will help mitigate fatigue during high-intensity training. The size and type of meal is determinant on how soon before the workout it is. The closer the meal, the smaller it should be and omit any added fats or fibrous foods which are slow to digest. A protein/carb meal is best within the 1-2 hours prior to training. An example of this would be: Shredded chicken + sweet potato with drizzle of honey, or rolled up deli turkey meat + couple rice cakes.

Pre-workout meals are very individual and personal on the size and type of food that is tolerated. It is best to experiment to find what works for you. Typically, a big meal sitting in your stomach before an intense metcon involving a lot of acidosis is less tolerated than before a slow strength training session. Also, a less intense session of skill/technique work will require less fuel than an intense session, therefore pre-workout meals can vary based on your needs and session objectives.



IMMEDIATE PRE

0-30 minutes before training (warm-up)

This phase is most applicable to those who are intermediate to advanced CrossFit athletes who participate for more than "fun" and whose sessions are particularly intense and/or long. This phase is to optimize blood glucose levels which if too low may contribute to fatigue. This is a good time to consume your pre-workout with caffeine (individual preference although research suggests positive effects of caffeine on performance), and a protein/carb shake made of fast digesting whey protein and carbohydrates such as dextrose, glucose, or maltodextrin. The larger the athlete, the more protein/carbs should be consumed.

INTRA

Training session

Unless the heat is extreme, or you are at an all-day event, or your training sessions are 2 or more hours long, intra-workout fueling is likely not necessary. This has similar goals as the prior period, to keep blood glucose from dropping too low, also to maintain hydration. Small amounts of protein and carbohydrates mixed in water with some sea salt would be ideal as a "homemade" sports performance drink. Depending on the size and needs of the athlete, 10-15g of protein and 30-60g of carbohydrates. But again, this is not needed if you are doing a standard CrossFit class.

POST

0-2 hours after training

The goals of this period is to replenish diminished glycogen stores, restore hydration, and also set yourself up well for your next training session, even if it's not until the next day. If you are relatively new to CrossFit (1 year or less) participating in a 1-hour class, consuming a well balanced meal after class of protein, fats, and carbohydrates post workout is sufficient and beneficial. It is also suitable to mix a protein and carbohydrate shake to help replace lost fluids that solid food cannot do. Most people find shakes to be convenient and fast. This is also a good time to include your creatine if you chose to take this supplement.

A general rule of thumb is a 1:1 ratio of grams of protein to carbohydrates. But again, the nature of your session will dictate the dietary needs. If you had a particularly glycogen-depleting anaerobic training session, you may need to double or even sometimes triple the carbohydrate ratio to a 1:2 or 1:3 if you're advanced. If you have more than one training session per day, the timing is more important and getting this shake in immediately after your first session is important so you have nutrients to recover and potentially consume more nutrients before the next session.

As with most things, the above is a guideline. It is backed by the latest science, but ultimately your ability to tolerate food/supplements around training is individual and will take time to establish. Being able to optimize your nutrition around your workout will help set you up for the best adaptation to your training. Yet, nutrition is only one part of the equation. Getting adequate sleep, mitigating stress in your life outside the gym, recovery and mobility work are all examples of other factors that'll when put together will allow you to reach your potential in CrossFit.

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