

Eat carbs before a run? Maybe reach for something else next time

May 9 2014, by Kathleen Haughney



Assistant Professor Michael Ormsbee.

(Medical Xpress)—You might hear that before a big race or game, it's wise to load up on carbs to make sure you have enough energy to get you through it.

But, it turns out, pre-exercise meals that are higher in protein or fat may also make good choices.

That's the focus of a new paper by Florida State University Assistant Professor Michael Ormsbee and his Human Performance and Sports Nutrition Lab. Ormsbee was invited to write a paper reviewing the current research on pre-activity nutrition for a special "Sports Nutrition" issue in the journal *Nutrients*.

Though [carbs](#) do work, there's been no significant research on other food groups to compare and contrast effectiveness.

"Carbs have been the focus for endurance runners but some new research and some anecdotal evidence suggests that higher fat diets may actually work before exercise to improve metabolism and possibly health and performance," Ormsbee said.

And that will help set the tone for some of Ormsbee's research moving forward. Ormsbee said the lab is launching a number of upcoming studies to investigate performance, health and body composition advantages to different foods and supplements for both endurance and strength athletes.

Ormsbee and doctoral students Dan Baur and Chris Bach examined research that had been the standard for the past few decades in [sports nutrition](#).

Baur said there was plenty of information available extolling the virtues of protein consumption post workout, but when it came to pre workout fuel, the information dried up.

"Everything you read right now is saying protein is good, but they've never taken a deep look at how it can affect your body before a workout or competition," Baur said. "The main finding was that more research is needed."

Added Bach: "There are a lot of preconceived notions and also there's some anecdotal evidence. For the most part, the work that we're getting into is really exciting stuff because it's a new frontier in the world of [sports performance](#)."

More information: Ormsbee, Michael J.; Bach, Christopher W.; Baur,

Daniel A. 2014. "Pre-Exercise Nutrition: The Role of Macronutrients, Modified Starches and Supplements on Metabolism and Endurance Performance." *Nutrients* 6, no. 5: 1782-1808. [DOI: 10.3390/nu6051782](https://doi.org/10.3390/nu6051782)

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