

Swimmers gain an advantage when they recover with chocolate milk, first-of-its-kind study reports

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Chocolate milk provides both proteins and carbohydrates that help refuel the body after exercise.

Grabbing chocolate milk after a hard swim could give swimmers a performance edge, according to new research presented at one of the nation's top sports medicine conferences – the American College of Sports Medicine's annual conference.¹ In a sport where seconds and even tenths of a second can make a big difference and intense practice routines are the norm, Indiana University researchers found that when collegiate, trained swimmers recovered with chocolate milk after an exhaustive swim, they swam faster in time trials later that same day. On

average, they shaved off 2.1 seconds per 200 yard swim, and 0.5 seconds per 75 yard sprint, compared to when they recovered with a traditional carbohydrate sports drink or calorie-free beverage.

"Chocolate milk is an ideal recovery drink. It's a 'real food,' has the right carb to protein ratio athletes need and it's less expensive than many alternatives," said Joel Stager, PhD, lead researcher at Indiana University. "From cyclists to runners to soccer players, there's a strong body of research supporting the benefits of recovering with [chocolate milk](#). Now, our research suggests these same benefits extend to swimmers – a sport that relies on quick recovery for multiple races within a single day."

The study is the first to test the benefits of chocolate milk in swimmers, and included six division one collegiate swimmers performing a muscle fuel (glycogen) depleting swim bout of 60 x 100 yards followed by five hours of recovery for three consecutive weeks. The athletes then recovered with one of three randomized beverages – reduced fat chocolate milk, commercial carbohydrate sports drink (with the same calories as the chocolate milk), or calorie-free beverage – immediately and two hours after the swim. Following the five-hour recovery period, three swim performance test sets were completed relying on aerobic (200 yards), anaerobic (75 yard sprint), and immediate energy metabolism (10 meters against resistance). While there were no differences in the immediate energy metabolism swims, there were significant differences in the aerobic and anaerobic swims – indicating better recovery after drinking chocolate milk.

Researchers, including Dr. Stager,² first studied chocolate milk because of its unique carb to protein ratio and now more than 20 studies support the benefits of recovering with the high-quality protein and nutrients in chocolate milk after a tough workout.³ With high-quality protein to build lean muscle, the right mix of protein and carbs to refuel exhausted

muscles, and fluids and electrolytes to help replenish the body, chocolate milk is a trusted part of many athletes [recovery](#) routines.

More information: 1. Stager JM, Brammer CL, Sossong T, Kojima K, Spanbaur D, Grand K, Wright BV. [Supplemental recovery nutrition affects swim performance following glycogen depleting exercise](#). Presented at the American College of Sports Medicine, 2014.

2. Karp JR1, Johnston JD, Tecklenburg S, Mickleborough TD, Fly AD, Stager JM. [Chocolate milk as a post-exercise recovery aid](#). *Int J Sport Nutr Exerc Metab*. 2006;16:78-91.

3. Read the research at <http://www.gotchocolatemilk.com/science>

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