

Boosting your diet for exercise

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(HealthDay)—A typical workout doesn't give you license to eat whatever you want.

Even a full hour of vigorous skiing burns just 600 [calories](#)—less than the amount in a super-sized fast food sandwich. That's why it's important to think of exercise as just one part of a shape-up plan.

Exercise works the [cardiovascular system](#) and builds muscle, but it takes [calorie restriction](#) to also lose weight. Small diet tweaks that you can make when you're building a healthier [body](#) through exercise will maximize your efforts. Here's what you need to know about nutrition when you work out regularly.

You don't need to fuel up like a marathon runner, but give your body some nourishment about two hours before every workout to make exercise more effective. Have a small meal with healthy carbs and protein, and some fat. If eating two hours in advance doesn't work with your schedule, aim for a small snack about an hour before your workout.

It's also important to eat a small meal with carbs and protein within two hours after your workout to give your body the nutrients it needs.

Keep in mind that "calories in and calories out" is a balancing act that varies from person to person. So whether you're trying to lose weight or maintain, keep a journal that records the amount of calories you get from [food](#) as well as the amount of calories burned off during workouts to see if your intake needs to be adjusted up or down.

Beware of so-called training supplements. These products aren't regulated, and their claims may not have any science behind them. If you're getting a good amount of "whole" (unprocessed and unpackaged) foods in your diet, you shouldn't need any of these aids.

Finally, it can't be stated often enough: Drink water as needed before, during and after exercise to stay hydrated, especially in hot and humid conditions.

More information: The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has more about [supplement use](#).

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