

Spring into action

with better
nutrition!



Q: What about energy bars?

A: Sports bars, while convenient, are unfortunately not ideal for fueling or recovering from your workouts. Let's review some ideas about some popular energy bars on the market:

★ **Organic = natural, right?**

Look closer: Cliff's 'Nectar' Bar has 17g of sugar! Nectar bars are primarily made from dates, which are cause an exaggerated insulin response.

★ **Low sugar = healthier...or does it?**

Power Bar's "Protein Plus" claims 1g sugar on the nutrition facts. Scan the ingredients: the first listed is malitol, followed by sucralose- both sugar alcohols. As a sugar substitute, sugar alcohols provide fewer calories than sugar. The downside is that and they still may require insulin to be metabolized.

★ **A Hi-protein bar will help me rebuild and repair muscle.**

Actually, energy bars undergo an extreme heating process, which destroys many of the vitamins and denatures the protein (amino acids) in the bar, making them unavailable for absorption and hence unuseable by the body.

Q: What's the best thing to eat after soccer practice?

A: Research points to a snack that is primarily starch combined with a bit of protein. Specifically, you should eat a 3:1 ratio of starch to protein within 30 minutes of exercise. This half-hour period can be thought of as the "glycogen replacement window". The glycogen found in muscle has a chemical structure nearly identical to starchy foods, also known as complex carbohydrates (long-chains of glucose linked together). The good old potato is structurally very similar to glycogen (found in the body) and whole grains take a close 2nd. The added value of protein is that it elicits a greater insulin response to help the transport of glucose into the hungry muscle cell, allowing for better glycogen repletion.

An ideal recovery snack would look like:

- ★ ½ turkey sandwich w/ veggies on whole grain bread- Hold mayo & cheese; fat inhibits glycogen replacement.
- ★ Small baked sweet potato topped w/ non-fat yogurt
- ★ 1 slice 100% whole grain bread with 1 hard boiled egg
- ★ ½ whole wheat bagel topped w/ N.F. cottage cheese
- ★ Scrambled egg & veggies in a whole grain tortilla