



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF MUAYTHAI AMATEUR

The World Governing Body for Amateur Muaythai

ATHLETE'S NUTRITION GUIDE



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Suggested Nutrition

Meat – Choose from a variety of lean sources. Things to consider when selecting your meat source:

1) Composition and Digestion: White meat is made up of fast twitch muscle whereas red meat possesses more slow twitch muscle. The main difference between the color of the meat is the concentration of myoglobin. There is more myoglobin in red meat in addition to fat. Thus, lean white meat is more easily digested and is processed by your body more quickly than red meat. If you're looking to lose weight, choose white meat more often than red meat.

2) Source: If you do choose to eat meat, choose from the best quality food you can afford (grass fed/free range/pastured raised/organic) to minimize exposure to harmful substances/conditions that affect the nutrition and quality of the meat (toxins, antibiotics, hormones and other chemicals) and to be a more responsible steward for the planet.

Protein – Besides meat, fish, eggs, dairy, legumes, nuts, seeds and sea vegetables are excellent sources of pure protein. For non-meat eaters, be sure to eat from a variety of protein sources to ensure you are receiving a complete amino acid profile for the ultimate recovery. Remember, humans are omnivores, which means we have characteristics of both carnivores and herbivores. The features of our digestive system suggest that we were evolved to eat meat. Thus, incorporating a variety of protein sources with an emphasis on plant protein will ensure a more alkaline, anti-inflammatory and pro-recovery diet.

Fruits and Vegetables – Athletes can get a wide array of vitamins, minerals and enzymes by consuming an array of fruits and vegetables at every meal. Eat a wide variety of them as every fruit and vegetable contains specific vitamins and minerals. Remember, the more fresh, vibrant and colourful, the better. Choose in season and local fruits and vegetables whenever possible to ensure the freshest and most nutrient rich produce possible. Again, choose the best, most affordable produce possible (organic, local, in season). Due to the intensity and physical demands of Muay Thai training, leaning towards a more alkaline diet by eating more alkaline fruits and vegetables will create an optimal environment in your body for fast recovery and optimal performance.



Liquids – Water, water, water! One gallon a day is minimum for everybody in general. Two to three gallons is a must if you work out hard and/or live in a hot state. Again, this is a minimum, if you can drink more, do it. During training be sure to keep a carbohydrate and electrolyte drink on hand to facilitate hydration and prevent electrolyte imbalances. Try to drink about 250 mL of electrolyte and/or 10-15g of BCAAs or a protein (15g) and carbohydrate (30-45g) (if you're looking to gain weight) drink every hour or so.



Intake of coffee, soft drinks and tea will actually cause a water deficit so take these factors into account during the day and keep these to a minimum. Stay away from alcohol, it will slow you down, fatten you up, and put you in more situations where you are likely to be straying away from the healthy boxer's lifestyle!

Fats – Stick to healthy fats. In regards to your body fat, this has more to do with your genetic makeup than anything. If you have a body that builds up fat easily, stay away from unhealthy fats for at least five days out of the week. It's ok to enjoy your food once a week since boxing training is very tough and will burn off the fat quickly anyways. Unless you're an elite level boxer training for a world championship, your trainer won't know about the ice cream you ate for breakfast.

As an athlete, it is important to ensure you are getting a good supply of good fats as they are involved in metabolism, cell signalling, the health of body tissues, immunity, hormone production and absorption of many nutrients. Be sure to include a variety naturally occurring healthy fats in your diet (monounsaturated, polyunsaturated (omega 3&6 fatty acids) and saturated fats. Avoid industrially produced trans fats and hydrogenated fats. Omega-3's are particularly good for fighters because they are anti-inflammatory and enhance the immune system. Omega 3's can be found in nuts, seeds (hemp, chia, flax) fish, seaweed, pasture raised animals, avocado, coconut oil, olives and cacao nibs.

Superfoods

Contain a wide array of essential micronutrients and high quantities of vitamins and minerals. They contain very potent unique compounds and antioxidants that are often healing. Supplements aren't always digestible or have consistent potency. Superfoods, on the other hand, have a perfect delivery system for getting healing compounds into our body. The best way to prepare superfoods is not to overheat them and to combine them with other foods to receive the most nutrients. For example

- Combine green superfoods with healthy fats to facilitate the uptake of fat soluble vitamins
- Combine iron rich foods with vitamin C for better absorption
- Combine super spices with a fat source



Athlete's Suggested Diet Plan

- 5-6 small meals a day, every 2-3 hours.
- Drink water until your urine is clear (or light yellow).
- Eat a big meal for breakfast and another 2 hours before your workout.
- Eat before you get hungry, and stop before you get full.
- Good carbs are Low GI carbs, good proteins are LEAN meats + nuts, good fats are monounsaturated, polyunsaturated and saturated (nuts, fish, olive oil).
- Avoid sugars which create an inflammatory environment and adds stress to the body
- Balance your nutrients (carbs/proteins/fats), and limit your calorie intake.
- If you need to eat less, do it without starving. If you need to eat more, do it without over-eating.
- Your diet should fit your needs, and not the other way around



Diet Suggestion If you want to lose weight:

- Maintain a calorie deficit of 500-800 calories per day by eating less and/or spending more energy. Use lower deficits for long-term weight loss and higher deficits for short-term weight loss. It's usually much easier to create a calorie deficit from eating less than from working out more. Do not eat less than 1500 calories a day, adults need this much as a minimum to function.
- Stop eating just before you get full.
- Drinking water will help you feel full.
- During exercise, drink BCAAs or water.
- Do not go crazy low-carb. Decrease your entire calorie intake, instead of only your carbs (maintain your nutrient ratio!).

If you want to maintain weight:

- Eat until you're full.
- Keep doing what you're doing as far as training goes.
- During training, drink BCAAs or water

If you want to gain FAT weight:

- Eat as much as you can, as often as you can.
- During training, drink 1 protein and carbohydrate drink or BCAAs
- Staying active can help you build up the appetite to eat more.
- Go to sleep right after you eat a giant meal (that's the sumo wrestlers' secret to rapid fat gain).



If you want to gain lean muscle weight:

- Workout to build your body's demand to grow bigger muscles.
- Workout to build your appetite for eating more.
- During training, drink 1 protein and carbohydrate drink or BCAAs
- Eat sufficient protein. Consume between 0.5 and 1 times of your bodyweight in grams of protein. Example: if you weigh 100lbs, you need 50-100 grams of protein per day. (If you are overweight, then calculate using your TARGET body weight). Keep in mind that your diet must stay balanced. You cannot just increase protein, you have to add carbs and fats to balance your overall diet.
- The average person only needs 0.25 to 0.5 times their bodyweight in protein. (This would be fine for a recreational boxer.) Don't eat too much protein, you're not a bodybuilder! Extra protein doesn't help you, it hurts you.
- The trick to gaining muscle weight is to consume more calories than you use without over-eating! Basically, if you eat too much in one sitting, the extra will be thrown away as waste. What you want to do is spread the extra food across your 5-6 meals giving your body more chances to absorb all those extra calories.

(Information source: <http://www.expertboxing.com>)





Suggested Eating for Performance

If your goal is performance, then again, we advise a range from 200-600 grams of carbohydrates daily, depending on your activity in a given day and body type. You should still consume a gram of protein per pound of body weight, and have 20-30% of your calories from fat. You should also be in a caloric surplus.

Below is a sample diet.

- Breakfast: 1-2 cups of oatmeal, 1 tbsp ground flax seeds, 1 tbsp goji berries, 30g of protein of choice, 1 medium fresh banana
- Snack: 1 cup of quark or cottage cheese, 1 handful of nuts and a handful of mixed berries
- Lunch: a chicken salad, 1 tbsp hemp hearts, with olive oil, and 1-2 large sweet potatoes
- Snack: hummus and fresh vegetables
- During workout: essential amino acids and/or coconut water
- Post workout: 40 grams of whey protein, blended with orange juice, flax seed oil and blueberries
- Dinner: 1-2 cups of brown rice and/or quinoa, 1-2 cups roasted vegetables, broiled sesame salmon
- Pre-sleep: tuna, mixed salad, walnuts





Supplement Guides

Effective and safe Dietary Supplements People have often asked us, “I want to get serious with my training, so what kind of supplements should I look for, and what should I avoid?” Well, our response to this is, if you want to get serious about your training, then you should get serious about your diet, first. Therefore, before investing money into supplements, we strongly advise applying the correct dieting techniques discussed above; otherwise, your money will go to waste. Supplements are only a part of the equation, but if you do have everything else in place, they certainly can help. The following supplements may be advantageous to athletes:

- Whey protein powder – this is a high quality, fast digesting protein powder and well documented to support leanness, health, and performance.
- Plant Protein powder – brown rice, pea protein and hemp protein are great alternatives if your body cannot handle whey protein. There are also some great proteins that offer a mixed formula of plant proteins and other vitamins, minerals, superfoods and digestive enzymes to help your body assimilate the protein better.
- Joint Support Supplements – there are some high quality joint support supplements which help strengthen cartilage and decrease inflammation. These can be vital for sustaining a long, healthy career.
- Meal replacement powders or protein bars – these formulas can be a life saver, especially if you are in a rush and can't grab a whole meal. Having emergency meals like these around would be wise so you don't miss any meals. You can also find some great online recipes to make your own protein bars so you can control what you're putting into them.
- Calcium/Magnesium– calcium is vital to bone health, muscle function and nerve transmission but people are often deficient in this. You need between 200-600 mcg of calcium daily, through a combination of diet (dark leafy greens, sesame seeds, almonds, green beans and okra) and supplementation. Magnesium works together with Calcium so you need both. They attach to the same receptors in the body, however, so you need to take them at different times. The average person needs 500-750mg of magnesium daily as it is involved in the same functions as calcium, in addition to energy formation, maintenance of healthy blood vessels and is involved in over 300 metabolic functions.
- Fish Oil – as explained above, this supplement can help support cardiovascular health, as well as leanness. Just a serving of fish daily, or taking a fish oil supplement is adequate. When choosing your supplement, pay attention to the source of the fish oil (cold water fish being the preferred choice). Do not take fish oil supplements for more than 6 months as it will start to suppress the immune system.

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- Glutamine – this is a popular amino acid which may become deficient with extreme training. It is purported to support immune function and spare lean muscle.
- HMB – this is a metabolite of the popular amino acid leucine, and purported to improve recovery and performance. It is most effective during situations of enhanced muscle damage.
- Essential amino acid supplement powder – it is well documented that the essential amino acids, particularly the amino acids leucine, valine, and isoleucine (branched chain amino acids) are very effective for promoting lean mass. Having an essential amino acid powder between meals or pre workout is very effective.
- Multi-vitamin – given the large demands of intensive training it is good to keep your bases covered by investing in a high quality multi-vitamin. Eating a balanced diet from high quality sources is the best way to receive your vitamins and minerals, however, sometimes the foods that we eat do not contain the highest amounts of nutrients due to farming practices and sometimes our digestive system has a difficult time with the uptake and absorption of such vital nutrients. As a result, a multi-vitamin will help prevent any deficiencies that may occur with intensive training, keeping one's health and performance optimal.



*****Lastly, we advise against dangerous supplements including ephedrine, pro-hormones, and of course, steroids and the like*****

(Information source: <http://www.informed-choice.org/>)

