

The Wrestler's Top 10 Power Foods

As a wrestler, maintaining a competitive weight throughout the season can be hard. By selecting the most nutrient dense food options, while limiting those that can be detrimental to your performance, you will have more energy and endurance on the mat than your opponent. Remember, nutrition can make a good wrestler great, or a great wrestler good- which do you want to be?

Top 10 Foods to Include in My Diet

1. **Fresh fruits**- high in vitamins, minerals, fiber, and carbohydrates, these nutrient powerhouses will give you an energy boost!
2. **Whole grains**- bread, pasta, cereal, rice, oatmeal- these should be the staple of your diet and included daily. These carbohydrate packed foods will help keep your muscles fueled for competition.
3. **Low-fat dairy products or soy**- Include dairy or soy products 3 times per day to help increase your intake of bone-building calcium and Vitamin D, and protein, potassium, and riboflavin. Greek yogurt also provides double the protein of regular yogurt! Make a fresh fruit smoothie with dairy/soy to go!
4. **Lean meats**- chicken breast, beef sirloin, pork tenderloin and deli meats like roast beef, ham, and turkey provide protein rich sources to your diet, as well as iron and zinc. Include a protein source at every meal and snack!
5. **Vegetables**- dark leafy greens, as well as brightly colored vegetables are low in calories and are exploding with Vitamin C, A, folic acid, potassium, and iron just to name a few. You can't ever go wrong with raw or plain steamed veggies.
6. **Nuts and seeds**: rich in Vitamin E, healthy fats, and fiber, these little portion-controlled snacks can help you feel full for hours!
7. **Fish (canned or baked/broiled)**: Tuna, salmon and halibut are rich in Omega-3s, which help to reduce inflammation in the body after a hard workout. Eat fish 3 times/week for a heart healthy fat and lean protein source.
8. **Baked Potatoes/Sweet Potatoes**- bursting with Vitamin C, potassium, and carbohydrates, these are a great addition to a meal. Eat the skin to increase your fiber intake and top with light sour cream or mash with low-fat milk.
9. **Peanut butter**- a heart healthy fat and protein source that can be carried with you and added to bread, fresh fruit, pretzels or crackers for a quick meal or snack. Don't leave home without it!
10. **Eggs**- rich in protein, choline and Vitamin D, they can be included at breakfast, or as an on the go snack. Scramble in the microwave for 1 minute and add to an English muffin and a slice of cheese for your own breakfast sandwich.

Turn the page to see what foods might strip you of energy!

Foods to Limit During Wrestling Season

- 1. Soda and energy drinks-** contrary to popular belief, these concentrated sugary beverages will strip you of energy and contribute excessive calories. Also, once your body processes the caffeine, you will feel lethargic. Carbonated beverages can also cause GI upset during competition.
- 2. Fried Foods:** Fried meats, fries, and fast foods contribute high levels of fat and calories to your intake and will leave you feeling bloated and uncomfortable.
- 3. Candy, Pastries:** These items are very calorically dense and provide little to no nutritional value. They often take the place of healthier snack foods, therefore, reducing the overall nutrient content of your diet.
- 4. Full-fat Chips and Hot Cheetos:** Substitute these with low-fat baked chips or pretzels to help provide healthy carbohydrates to your muscles.
- 5. Concession stand items like nachos and pizza:** These high fat items may be an option for your fans, but they are not good options for you to consume. These will delay gastric emptying and you will go on the mat with your muscles starving for energy.

Limiting these items above as much as possible will give you the best opportunity to wrestle well. Your opponent likely did!