

Breakfast for swimmers

From next week we will be starting our new training times. This will mean some earlier starts and an increase for some in session length and overall training hours. It is really important swimmers are well hydrated and fueled to get the most out of their training and recovery.

Below are some tips (from Swim England) for Breakfast (swimmers need two breakfasts before and after mornings training!)

Breakfast ideas for young competitive swimmers *(Swim England 2016)*

One thing swim parents soon learn to live with is higher shopping bills. Swimmers are renowned for having huge appetites. A good breakfast will set them up for the day, so what you need are a few breakfast ideas for your young swimmers.

For an athlete a nutritious start to the day is vital. It helps with energy levels, concentration, mood, strength and endurance, as well as helping prevent the temptation to eat rubbish later in the day. A good breakfast also boosts the metabolism and immune system.

Nutritious breakfast ideas for swimmers

As well as being nutritious you want breakfast to be quick to prepare. Dragging your child out of bed in the early hours for training is difficult enough without complex breakfast recipes, so here are a few breakfast ideas:

Porridge with blueberries or sliced banana (or any other fresh fruit)

Non-sugary cereals. Look for whole wheat, and oat cereals. But, avoid anything that starts 'Choco' or 'Frosty'. They may taste good but the high sugar levels are a disaster for the metabolism. They offer immediate energy surges while promoting greater fat storage

Fresh fruit with natural yoghurt

Yoghurt-based fruit smoothie (*try ½ cup 100% juice, ½ cup milk, 1 cup fruit; ½ cup yogurt*)

Toast/ Teacake/Muffins/ Bagel. The world would be a healthier place without white flour breads. Instead go for whole wheat options if possible, such as wholemeal or granary with complex carbohydrates in them. Jam, honey and marmalade, although high in sugars, are fine in *small* amounts

Eggs (Poached/Scrambled/Boiled) Both eggs and beans are protein-high compliments to your toast.

Fruits (raisins, banana, orange, apple, mango, grapefruit etc.)

Milk

Fresh fruit juice. When it comes to breakfast steer clear of the high sugar fruit juices. If you like fruit juices go for 100% freshly squeezed produce. Try a 400ml protein shake (they're actually pretty tasty!) or 300ml of milk is spot on

Water. Make sure your child has at least two water bottles for morning training. Swimmers should be drinking the first bottle on their way to training

You may also want to consider making breakfast at the weekend and freezing ready for the week ahead. Poached egg and spinach wraps, for example, can be frozen and then heated in the microwave as a quick nutritious breakfast.

If your child finds it impossible to eat before early morning training, or is desperate for a few extra minutes in bed, try encouraging them to drink a milkshake made with milk mixed with liquidised fruit, or even just munching a banana en route to training or school is better than nothing.

The importance of eating well prior to training sessions cannot be underestimated.