

## **Eating for Wrestling Performance**

Wrestlers need to maintain high energy levels to fuel their intense workouts. They also need to be conscious about controlling their weight. In order to provide their body with fuel and nutrients and control their weight, **wrestlers need to concentrate their nutritional efforts on eating foods that are high in complex carbohydrates and low in fat.** Contrary to some opinions, **wrestlers can eat a healthy, balanced diet and still control their weight. The key is choosing low-fat, high carbohydrate foods that contain important nutrients.**

The following are examples of foods that have high energy content without unwanted extra calories.

**Fruits:** Fresh, frozen, canned or dried

Fruit Juices	Grapes
Apples	Kiwi
Applesauce	Oranges
Apricots	Peaches
Bananas	Pears
Cantaloupe	Pineapple
Fruit Cocktail	Plums
Fruit Salad	Raisins
Fruit Roll-ups	Strawberries
Grapefruit	

**Vegetables:** Fresh, frozen, or canned. **Canned vegetables are higher in sodium which can cause additional fluid retention and added weight.** Fresh or frozen vegetables are lower in sodium and high in nutrients.

Vegetable Juices	Green Beans
Asparagus	Peas
Baked Beans and Chili Beans	Potatoes, baked or boiled
Broccoli	Spinach
Carrots	Sweet Potatoes
Cauliflower	Tomato Sauce
Corn	Tomatoes
Dried Beans and Peas	Zucchini

**Breads:** Thicker, heavier, whole-grain breads have more carbohydrates than thinner, lighter bread. This makes them slightly higher in calories, but those are nutritious calories that can be used for sustained energy as well as a source of vitamins and minerals. A good goal is to eat whole-grain products one-half of the time.

Bagels	Muffins, adding fruit such as blueberries adds carbohydrates
Biscuits	Bran Muffins
Pancakes	Bread
Pita Bread	Corn Bread
Pizza, cheese or vegetarian with thick crust	Dinner Rolls
Rice Cakes	English Muffins
Sandwich Buns	Low-fat Crackers
Tortillas	Waffles

**Cereals and Pasta:** Adding whole milk to cereal, or fatty meat sauce to pasta greatly increases the amount of fat calories. Eating cold cereals that are fortified with vitamins and minerals are excellent sources of energy. Cereals high in sodium should be chosen less often than those low in sodium.

Cereals, hot or cold, except granola which is higher in fat content: Macaroni, Noodles, Rice (white or brown), Spaghetti, Stuffing, from mix.

**Dairy Products:** Choose low-fat whenever possible.

Cheese (low-fat)	Pudding (made with low-fat milk)
Cottage Cheese (low-fat)	String Cheese
Frozen Yogurt (low-fat)	Yogurt (low-fat with or without fruit)
Milk, skim (white or chocolate)	

**Desserts:** Choose those low in fat or sugar whenever possible.

Angel Food Cake	Granola Bar (plain)
Animal Crackers	Low-fat Frozen Yogurt
Brownies (made without oil and no frosting)	Popcorn (air popped with no butter)
Cereal Party Mix	Popsicles
Frozen Fruit Juice Bars	Pretzels (no butter)
Fruit Bars (ie, Fig Bars)	Pudding (made with low-fat milk)
Gingersnaps	Sherbet
Graham Crackers	Toppings (honey, jam or syrup)
	Vanilla Wafers

Wrestlers also need adequate amounts of protein to build, maintain and repair body cells (especially muscle tissue), help the body resist infection, and regulate body functions. Care should be taken **to eat food containing protein that is also low in fat**. The following foods are the best choices for weight conscious wrestlers wanting moderate protein, low-fat foods. These foods provide adequate amounts of protein for student athletes, without unwanted extra calories.

**Meats:** Care should be taken to choose meats that are **low-fat (10% fat or less) and low-sodium**. Some processed meats may be low-fat, but they are often extremely high in sodium. **If using lean ground beef in casseroles, tacos, chili, etc., it can be rinsed with water after it is cooked. Rinsing significantly reduces the fat calories.** Meats should be broiled, baked or grilled to keep the fat content to a minimum.

1. · Beef (lean such as round, sirloin or tenderloin)
2. · Chicken (skinless, white meat is lowest in fat)
3. · Fish
4. · Luncheon Meats (95% lean, but be careful of the sodium content)
5. · Pork (lean such as Bacon or ham, but be careful of the sodium content)
6. · Tuna (water packed)
7. · Turkey (skinless, white meat is lowest in fat)
8. · Venison

Wrestlers should also be sure to drink adequate amounts of low calorie beverages. By selecting drinks that are low in calories, a wrestler can drink as much as he desires without risk of added calories.

**Beverages:** Drinking enough fluids to remain hydrated is essential to health and performance. Water and beverages containing nutrients are the best choices.

1. · **Water (Minimum of 6-8, 8 ounce glasses per day)**
2. · **Milk (Minimum of 3-4, 8 ounce glasses per day)**
3. · **Juices, fruit (unsweetened) and vegetable**
4. · **Sports Drinks**
5. · **Diet Pop, decaffeinated**

· **Iced Tea, unsweetened & decaffeinated**

**Fats and Oils:** Select dressings and oils that are fat-free, or low-calorie. Substituting equal amounts of applesauce for cooking oil in recipes greatly reduces the calorie count.

- i. · **Fat-free or low-fat gravies**
- ii. · **Fat-free or low-fat mayonnaise**
- iii. · **Fat-free or low-fat salad dressings**
- iv. · **Substitutes such as “I Can’t believe it is not butter”**

SAMPLE MENUS AND SNACKS BASED ON AN  
APPROXIMATE 2000 CALORIES A DAY (Based on 3 meals with a snack)

DAY 1

<b>Breakfast:</b>
2 medium (6") pancakes
¼ cup low-calorie syrup
1, 8 oz. cup skim milk
1, 4 oz. glass orange juice
<b>Snack:</b>
1 orange
Beverage (water, at least 1 glass)
<b>Lunch:</b>
3 slices (3 oz.) turkey, 2 slices bread, low-fat cheese, lettuce & tomato
1 medium lettuce salad with 2 Tbsp. low-fat dressing
Beverage (water, at least 1 glass)
2 vanilla wafers
<b>Dinner:</b>
1, 3 oz. broiled chicken breast, no skin
1 cup broccoli
½ cup mashed potatoes, with skim milk
1 dinner roll
2 cups skim milk
½ cup applesauce

DAY 2

<b>Breakfast:</b>
1 bowl (cup) cold cereal
1 banana
1 cup skim milk
1, 4 oz. glass grapefruit juice
<b>Snack:</b>
½ bagel, with jam
Beverage (water, at least 1 glass)
<b>Lunch:</b>
3 oz. water-packed tuna, 2 slices bread, 2 tsp. low-fat mayonnaise made with lean ground beef
1 small bowl chicken noodle soup
1 cup skim milk
Carrot sticks
1 apple
<b>Dinner:</b>
2 cups spaghetti noodles, ½ cup tomato sauce
1 med. lettuce salad, 2 Tbsp. low-fat dressing
1 cup skim milk
2 bread sticks
1 cup grapes

DAY 3

<b>Breakfast:</b>
2 slices toast, with jam
1 grapefruit
1 cup skim milk
<b>Snack:</b>
1 banana
Beverage (water, at least 1 glass)
<b>Lunch:</b>
Pasta salad with 1 cup cooked pasta, 1 ½ cups raw vegetables, 2 oz. lean ham, 1/8 cup low-fat Italian dressing

<i>1 cup skim milk</i>
<i>½ cup applesauce</i>
<b>Dinner:</b>
<i>2 bean burritos with 2 small flour tortillas</i>
<i>¼ cup fat-free refried beans, 2 Tbsp. grated cheese</i>
<i>tomato, lettuce &amp; 2 Tbsp. salsa</i>
<i>½ cup rice</i>
<i>1 cup skim milk</i>
<i>½ cup canned peaches</i>

**DAY 4**

<b>Breakfast:</b>
<i>1 cup cooked oatmeal with ¼ cup raisins</i>
<i>1 cup skim milk</i>
<i>1 orange</i>
<b>Snack:</b>
<i>4 graham cracker squares</i>
<i>Beverage (water, at least 1 glass)</i>
<b>Lunch:</b>
<i>Stir-fried vegetables with 1 cup broccoli</i>
<i>½ cup carrots, 1 tbsp. soy sauce</i>
<i>1 cup rice</i>
<i>1 cup skim milk</i>
<i>1 cup strawberries</i>
<i>1 small dinner roll</i>
<b>Dinner:</b>
<i>3 oz. lean steak</i>
<i>1 large baked potato with low-fat cottage cheese</i>
<i>1 medium vegetable salad such as spinach or lettuce mixed with other vegetables (carrots, celery, radishes, etc.), 2 tbsp. low-fat dressing</i>
<i>1 cup skim milk</i>
<i>1 slice angel food cake</i>

**DAY 5**

<b>Breakfast:</b>
<i>2 slices of toast with jam</i>
<i>½ cup grape juice</i>
<i>1 cup skim milk</i>
<b>Snack:</b>
<i>1 small bran muffin</i>
<i>Beverage (water, at least 1 glass)</i>
<b>Lunch:</b>
<i>1 sandwich bun, 3 slices (3 oz.) lean ham</i>
<i>1 slice low-fat cheese</i>
<i>10 (1 oz.) pretzels</i>
<i>½ cup applesauce</i>
<i>Celery sticks</i>
<i>1 cup skim milk</i>
<b>Dinner:</b>
<i>Tuna-noodle casserole (1 cup noodles, 3 oz. water packed tuna)</i>
<i>½ cup cooked peas</i>
<i>1 small dinner roll</i>
<i>1 medium lettuce salad, 2 tbsp. low-fat dressing</i>
<i>1 cup skim milk</i>
<i>1 frozen fruit juice bar</i>

**DAY 6**

<b>Breakfast:</b>
<i>1 blender drink, includes 1 banana</i>
<i>1 cup skim milk, 1 tbsp. peanut butter</i>
<i>1 slice toast with jam</i>
<b>Snack:</b>
<i>1 banana</i>
<i>Beverage (water, at least 1 glass)</i>

<b><u>Lunch:</u></b>
<b><u>1 small lean hamburger with bun</u></b>
<b><u>10 pretzels</u></b>
<b><u>1 cup skim milk</u></b>
<b><u>2 fig bars</u></b>
<b><u>½ cup pears</u></b>
<b><u>Dinner:</u></b>
<b><u>3 oz. lean pork roast</u></b>
<b><u>½ cup cooked rice</u></b>
<b><u>1 cup cooked broccoli</u></b>
<b><u>1 bread slice with margarine</u></b>
<b><u>1 cup skim milk</u></b>

**DAY 7**

<b><u>Breakfast:</u></b>
<b><u>1 cup cold cereal, skim milk</u></b>
<b><u>1 banana</u></b>
<b><u>½ cup fruit juice</u></b>
<b><u>Snack:</u></b>
<b><u>1 fruit</u></b>
<b><u>Beverage (water, at least 1 glass)</u></b>
<b><u>Lunch:</u></b>
<b><u>3 slices (3 oz.) lean chicken, 2 bread slices,</u></b>
<b><u>lettuce, tomato, 1 tbsp. low-fat mayonnaise</u></b>
<b><u>1 fruit</u></b>
<b><u>1 cup skim milk</u></b>
<b><u>1 small low-fat pudding</u></b>
<b><u>1 cup skim milk</u></b>
<b><u>Dinner:</u></b>
<b><u>3 oz. roast turkey</u></b>
<b><u>1 large baked potato, 1 pat margarine</u></b>
<b><u>1 cup cooked vegetables</u></b>
<b><u>1 bread slice or roll</u></b>
<b><u>1 cup skim milk</u></b>

**Food/Calorie Comparisons**

**Meats: The following foods have approximately 120-150 calories per 3 oz. service.**

Fish	Skinless, white chicken
Lean ham	Water-packed tuna
Lean roast beef	Skinless white turkey
Lean ground beef	

**When cooking meat, it should be broiled, baked or grilled to keep the fat content to a minimum. Choosing leaner cuts of meat also helps in keeping fat content low.**

**Breads: The following foods have approximately 50-100 calories per serving.**

1 biscuit	1 bread slice
>	½ hamburger or hot dog, bun
½ English muffin	
1 dinner roll	5 saltine cracker squares
1-6" corn tortilla	1-4" pancake
1-4" waffle	

**Adding butter, mayonnaise or margarine greatly increases the calorie content.**

**Fruits and vegetables vary greatly in calories, but are all low in calories compared to most other foods. They are also complete carbohydrates with the exception of avocados, unless they are topped with margarine, butter or high calorie dressings. They are great sources of energy.**

**Healthful ideas for eating out:**

Cheese or vegetable pizza	Side salad, low-cal dressing
Tostada	Bean or chicken burrito
Roast beef sandwich	Chicken sandwich, low-cal mayonnaise
Chili	barbecue sauce or honey mustard
Baked potato	Skim milk

**Best food choices from convenience stores:**

Low-fat yogurt	Fruit
Fruit bar cookies (fig bars)	Nutri Grain bars
Granola bar (non-chocolate)	Pretzels
String cheese	Juice box
Low-fat chocolate milk	V-8 juice
Animal crackers	

**Some ideas to follow: summary**

Break up your three balanced meals a day into five moderate portions (For example take the food you would normally eat at one meal and break it up into two smaller meals two hours apart. It's what I call feeding the machine. Remember that most of our eating is from habit not hunger). This will increase your metabolism while increasing your energy levels. If this is not possible remain with three meals, but keep the portions modest. Remember energy in= energy out. Starving is not an option. Try to include foods from all the major food groups: grains, vegetables, fruits, meat/fish, milk/cheese

Avoid high fat, high sugar foods and snacks such as chips, soft drinks, mayonnaise, candy bars, desserts

Emphasize foods that are high in complex carbohydrates such as cereals, rice, pasta, breads, baked potatoes, vegetables. But remember everything in moderation.

Use skim or 2% milk instead of whole milk. Substitute water for high sugar soft drinks.

Stick to your diet and work-out program and you will get the results you want. It takes time to accomplish your goals. Be patient.

Remember: Good nutrition is something a wrestler must apply each day throughout the season and not just the day before a match. If a wrestler takes short cuts, expect to pay the price in reduced performance.