



August 2, 2016 – Grand Rapids, MI

## Sports Nutrition Before Your Workout

With the Olympics around the corner, sports nutrition's a timely topic. Many sports nutrition products are available, but I've wondered whether you understood why you might use some of these products. This week, I'll cover three areas of sports nutrition.

Let's begin with pre-workout products—what purpose do they serve? The first purpose is to increase fuel availability. When you exercise, you need sugar released from glycogen and fatty acids released from fat stores; that allows your body to be ready to use calories from those fuels at a higher rate when you begin your workout.

Another purpose is to get the respiratory system ready for action. Whether you're going to do an aerobic workout or a weight-training workout, you'll be able to increase oxygen exchange if the lungs are relaxed. That goes together with an increase in cardiovascular function, another purpose of pre-workout products. Blood vessels need to be relaxed in areas such as the heart and the lungs.



Pre-workout products often contain caffeine, niacin, and beta-alanine. I also like the recent addition of medium-chain triglycerides to some products because these fats can be used as a fuel without processing by the liver. Be sure to use caution if you're going to use these products; they're safe to use but can raise blood pressure and heart rate and can stimulate the nervous system. That's what they're supposed to do, but not everyone can handle them.

Products that can be used during workouts are up on Thursday.

What are you prepared to do today?

**Dr. Chet**

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