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## Balancing Breakfast Needs with Morning Workouts

By Keith B. Wheeler, Ph.D.

And Angeline M. Cameron

Q. What do you suggest for a swimmer who cannot eat breakfast before a workout and immediately goes to school after the workout?

A. First, the swimmer needs to realize how important it is to get some nutrients (primarily carbohydrate and water) both before and after a morning workout. Research

has conclusively shown that fasting will reduce both endurance and performance in a wide variety of activities.

If a swimmer gets up at 5:30 AM to workout without any nutritional support except when he or she ate the previous night (10 hours earlier), endurance and performance will likely be compromised. If the same swimmer then skips nutritional support after the workout, the day's subsequent activities could be quite stressful and cognitive abilities would be reduced.

Swimmers should try to consume at least 12 ounces of water or fluid and at least 100 grams of carbohydrate before a morning workout. A 12 ounce glass of orange juice or apple juice in addition to 3 bananas or 4 apples would supply this amount. If the athlete cannot tolerate solid foods during this period, complete liquid supplements (eg, Exceed\ Sports Nutrition Supplement) are excellent alternatives. One or two cans before and after a morning workout will help supply needed nutrients and water.