

# FUEL YOUR BRAIN FOR OPTIMAL RECOVERY

Dietitians are an important part of a sports medicine team when it comes to healing from a concussion. Headaches, dizziness, nausea, and gastrointestinal issues are often experienced after a concussion. What you eat can slow your recovery from a concussion by decreasing appetite and disturbing sleep patterns and also in certain situations can directly contribute to the above symptoms due to new food intolerances. Hydration, another important part of your body's recovery, helps to facilitate nutrient delivery to your brain. Therefore, consulting with a sports dietitian if you are struggling to recover from any of these symptoms will enhance the recovery process by the following:

- Helping you to create a meal plan adequate in energy and nutrient-dense for healing (i.e. Vitamin D, Omega 3 Fatty Acids, Curcumin, Antioxidants, Magnesium and Riboflavin)
- Identifying foods that combat nausea, headaches, etc.
- Maintaining protein to promote recovery
- Monitoring hydration for optimal healing
- Giving you food related ideas to enhance sleep
- Assisting with food preparation if necessary

## INITIAL STRATEGIES FOR RECOVERY

1. Avoid skipping meals. Eat small frequent meals every couple of hours to help give you the energy and nutrients you need for adequate healing. Choose nutrient dense foods (i.e. fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds) that also help supply the body with the calories it needs.
2. Nauseous? Try dry foods (crackers and toast) or cold foods (sandwiches), sip on liquids, and avoid very sweet, greasy, fried, or spicy foods. Also avoid foods with strong and offsetting odors.
3. Maintain protein intake to support a healthy immune system and build muscle. Good sources of protein include nuts/seeds, beans, soy, lean meats, poultry, and dairy products. Prioritize hydration with hot or cold fluids to help facilitate nutrient delivery to the brain. Try to drink at least half your weight in fluid ounces throughout the day (i.e. 120 lb individual should drink 60 ounces of water). Having pale yellow urine throughout the day (see chart on back) is a good sign of adequate fluid intake.
4. Choose food first! A well-balanced diet with enough protein and calories from all food groups contains plenty of vitamins and minerals. If you avoid certain foods, please seek assistance from a dietitian to help navigate supplement use.
5. Moderation is key! Nutrient dense foods (fruits, vegetables, beans/legumes, nuts/seeds, and whole grains) keep your brain healthy and strong! Keep processed foods (candy, soda, white breads, high-fat meats, and fried foods) to minimum for adequate health and weight maintenance.

## SAMPLE SNACK/MEAL IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED!

- Greek yogurt with chia/flaxseeds and berries
- Grilled/baked salmon with broccoli
- Walnuts with an orange
- Smoothie with milk, yogurt, berries and kale
- Chicken salad sandwich with grapes and cashews
- Apple slices with nut butter
- Fortified cereal with milk
- Carrot slices and hummus

## ARE YOU HYDRATED?

HYDRATED
HYDRATED
HYDRATED
MILDLY DEHYDRATED
MODERATELY DEHYDRATED
MODERATELY DEHYDRATED
DEHYDRATED
SEVERELY DEHYDRATED

DRUG FREE SPORT  
**AXIS**