EATING FOR
WRESTLING
PERFORMANCE

IOWA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

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

**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.

Asparagus  
Baked Beans and Chili Beans  
Broccoli  
Carrots

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

**Breads:** Thicker, heavier, whole-grain breads have more carbohydrate 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  
Biscuits  
Bran Muffins  
Bread  
Corn Bread  
Dinner Rolls  
English muffins  
Low-fat crackers  
Muffins, adding fruit such as blueberries adds carbohydrates  
Pancakes  
Pita Bread  
Pizza, cheese or vegetarian with thick crust  
Rice Cakes  
Sandwich Buns  
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 a mix

Dairy Products: Choose low-fat whenever possible.

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

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

Angel Food Cake
Animal Crackers
Brownies, made without oil and no frosting
Cereal Party Mix
Frozen Fruit Juice Bars
Fruit Bars (ie. Fig bars)
Gingersnaps
Graham Crackers
Granola Bar, plain-no chocolate
Low-fat Frozen Yogurt
Popcorn, air popped with no butter
Popsicles
Pretzels, not butter
Pudding, made with low-fat milk
Sherbet
Toppings, such as honey, jam, or syrup
Vanilla Wafers

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.

Beef, lean such as round, sirloin, or tenderloin
Chicken - **skinless, white meat is lowest in fat**
Fish
Luncheon Meats, 95% lean, but be careful of the sodium content
Pork, lean such as Canadian Bacon or ham, but be careful of the sodium content
Tuna, water packed
Turkey - **skinless, white meat is lowest in fat**
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.

Water (Minimum of 6-8, 8 ounce glasses per day)
Milk (Minimum of 3-4, 8 ounces glasses per day)
Juices, fruit (unsweetened) and vegetable
Sports Drinks
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.

Fat-free or low-fat Gravies
Fat-free or low-fat Mayonnaise
Fat-free or low-fat salad dressings
Substitutes such as Molly McButter or Butter Buds

Wrestler 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 foods containing protein that are 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
SAMPLE MENUS AND SNACKS
BASED ON AN APPROXIMATE 2000 CALORIE A DAY

DAY 1

Breakfast:
2 medium (6") pancakes
1/4 cup low-calorie syrup
1, 8 oz. cup skim milk
1, 4 oz. glass orange juice

Lunch:
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 one glass)
2 vanilla wafers

Snack:
1 orange
Beverage (water, at least one glass)

Dinner:
1, 3 oz. broiled chicken breast, no skin
1 cup broccoli
1/2 cup mashed potatoes, with skim milk
1 dinner roll
2 cups skim milk
1/2 cup pineapple

DAY 2

Breakfast:
1 bowl (cup) cold cereal
1 banana
1 cup skim milk
1, 4 oz. glass grapefruit juice

Lunch:
3 oz. water-packed tuna, 2 slices bread, 2 teaspoons low fat mayonnaise
1 small bowl chicken mayonnaise
1 cup skim milk
Carrot sticks
1 apple

Snack:
1/2 bagel, with jam
Beverage (water, at least one glass)

Dinner:
2 cups spaghetti noodles, 1/2 cup tomato sauce made with lean ground beef
1 medium lettuce salad with 2 Tbsp. low-fat dressing
1 cup skim milk
2 bread sticks
1 cup grapes

DAY 3

Breakfast:
2 slices toast, with jam
1 grapefruit
1 cup skim milk

Lunch:
Pasta salad with 1 cup cooked pasta, 1 1/2 cups raw vegetables, 2 oz. lean ham, 1/8 cup low-fat Italian dressing
1 cup skim milk
1/2 cup applesauce

Snack:
1 banana
Beverage (water, at least one glass)

Dinner:
2 bean burritos with 2 small flour tortillas, 1/4 cup fat-free refried beans, 2 Tbsp. grated cheese, tomato, lettuce, & 2 Tbsp. salsa
1/2 cup rice
1 cup skim milk
1/2 cup canned peaches

Snack:
2 cups air popped popcorn with Molly McBmber
Beverage (unsweetened ice tea, at least 1 glass)
DAY 4

Breakfast:
1 cup cooked oatmeal, with 1/4 cup raisins
1 cup skim milk
1 orange

Lunch:
Stir-fried vegetables with 1 cup broccoli, 1/2 cup carrots,
1 Tbsp. Soy sauce
1 cup rice
1 cup skim milk
1 cup strawberries

Snack:
4 graham cracker squares
Beverage (water, at least one glass)

Dinner:
3 oz. lean steak
1 large baked potato with low-fat cottage cheese
1 medium vegetable salad such as spinach or lettuce mixed with other vegetables (carrots, celery, radishes, etc.)
2 Tbsp. low-fat dressing
1 cup skim milk
1 small dinner roll
1 slice angel food cake

DAY 5

Breakfast:
2 slices of toast with jam
1/2 cup grape juice
1 cup skim milk

Lunch:
1 sandwich bun, 3 slices (3 oz.) lean ham, 1 slice low-fat cheese
10 (1 oz.) pretzels
1/2 cup applesauce
Celery sticks
1 cup skim milk

Snack:
1 small bran muffin
Beverage (water, at least one glass)

DAY 6

Breakfast:
1 blender drink which includes 1 banana, 1 cup skim milk, & 1 Tbsp. peanut butter
1 slice toast with jam

Lunch:
1 small, lean hamburger with bun
10 pretzels
1 cup skim milk
2 fig bars

Snack:
1 banana
Beverage (water, at least one glass)

Dinner:
3 oz. lean pork roast
1/2 cup cooked rice
1 cup cooked broccoli
1 slice of bread with margarine
1/2 cup pears
1 cup skim milk

DAY 7

Breakfast:
1 cup cold cereal with skim milk
1 banana
1/2 cup fruit juice

Lunch:
3 slices (3 oz.) lean chicken with 2 slices bread, lettuce, tomato, & 1 Tbsp. low-fat mayonnaise
1 fruit
1 cup skim milk
1 small low-fat pudding
Snack:
1 fruit
Beverage (water, at least one glass)

Dinner:
3 oz. roast turkey
1 large baked potato with 1 pat margarine
1 cup cooked vegetables
1 slice bread or roll
1 cup skim milk
1/2 cup fruit cocktail

Food/Calorie Comparisons:

Meats: The following foods have approximately 120-150 calories per 3 ounce serving.
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 slice bread
1/2 English muffin
1/2 hamburger or hot dog bun
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 completely carbohydrate, 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 with low-cal dressing
Tostada
Bean or chicken burrito
Roast beef sandwich
Chicken sandwich, with low-cal mayonnaise, barbecue sauce, or honey mustard
Chili
Baked potato
Skim Milk

Best food choices from convenience stores:
Low-fat yogurt
Fruit
Fruit bar cookies (ie. fig bars)
Nutri Grain bars
Granola bar (non-chocolate)
 Pretzels
String cheese
Juice box
Low-fat chocolate milk
V-8 juice
Animal crackers