

4 Must-Do Nutrition Tips for Women Who Workout

A lot of research has been done in order to understand the effect of physical activity on micronutrient requirement. It sounds intuitive that when a woman does more physical activity her nutritional requirements increase. That is, she will need more protein, more starch, more fat and just more food in order to stay healthy. That's why you see young female athletes eating so much more than the regular girl in college. But is it necessary that her vitamin and mineral requirements also increase?

Unfortunately, the final word on that is still not out. Numerous studies have been done but almost all studies have an experimental flaw or the other leading to unclear conclusions. While there is some evidence proving that a woman in training will need vitamins and minerals at quantities above RDA, there is no clarity on how much more. And since there is a clear and known risk that arises from over-supplementation, the final recommendation is the following -

If you are a woman who trains, make very sure that you get RDA of all vitamins and minerals. Do not supplement with anything, especially iron, without talking to your doctor.

How do you ensure you get the right quantities of everything without supplementing?

Simple. By eating wholesome real food in the right combinations and portions.

One can get everything that their body requires from nature. That's how we evolved and we'll always be safe in nature's hands. But the problem today is different - Not knowing what to eat. And because we're confused about what to eat, we easily buy into exciting food products that promise to be gluten-free, sugar-free and fat-free but ignore the shiny little banana on the counter (which is also gluten-free, sugar-free and fat-free by the way).

Here is what you need to do to fuel yourself sufficiently

- **Eat vegetables with every meal.** Vegetables are micronutrient powerhouses. Even the weakest vegetable has more to offer than the most nutritious grain. They are rich in vitamins and minerals and since they are loaded with fiber it's almost impossible for you to overdose on them. We recommend that you include 1 cup of cooked or raw vegetables with every meal you eat.

- **Build your meals around protein.** Why? Protein forms the building blocks of your body and so it should form the core of your plate. As a training woman, you rely on your muscles to do a lot of things - running, climbing, lifting, playing and more. Don't you need

to feed them? That's why. So every time you eat a meal make sure there is something egg or cheese or meat or paneer or seafood in it. If nothing else is available, have a tall glass of milk or curd with your meal.

- **More starch during your cycle.** It's not just you. Everyone craves something starchy and sweet during their cycle. It is physiology. It's OK to eat more starch during those days. Your body is working much harder than usual when you menstruate. It's only fair that you give it some extra energy so it can help you get through the day.
- **Magnesium** is a mineral which a lot of women don't get enough of. Painful periods, premenstrual migraines and anxiety are a symptom. From a training perspective, magnesium is responsible for muscle relaxation (while calcium is for muscle contraction). So sufficient magnesium is required to be able to recover successfully from training sessions and make progress. We strongly recommend that you consume magnesium rich foods like spinach, beans and nuts at least twice every week.