It takes serious commitment and athletic ability to reach your peak performance level within any sport- and it requires athletic ability that spans strength and power, quickness, agility, technique and endurance. That means you have to get serious about your nutrition and how you use it in order to maximize training and recovery, and ultimately, performance. You've made time to train – now make it count!

PRE-TRAINING

Before a workout your body needs easy-to-digest fuel, aka carbohydrate. This can be a piece of fruit like a banana or other carb-containing food or drink.

Blood flow is always a big deal but during exercise it is even more important as it can be the difference between hitting a wall and powering through. Nitrates found in vegetables, such as beets and spinach, have support for improving athletic endurance and performance when taken in concentrated form before exercise.

DURING TRAINING

During exercise, your nutrient goals should support optimal hydration. Water will always reign supreme for this, but depending on type and duration of training, other nutrients may offer further support to keep those muscles working, setting the body up for a speedy recovery.

For longer or high-intensity training, or for workouts in warm, humid weather, having electrolyte support can help maintain hydration status. Easy-to-digest fuel during training can also help you maintain performance and energy stores.

POST-TRAINING

You've trained hard, now it's time to provide your body with the nutrients it needs to help it recover and repair. Whether through a balanced healthy meal or single nutrients like protein, the goals of the post-exercise period are to refuel, rebuild and rehydrate muscles as soon as possible after finishing exercise.

Note the 'window' of recovery may be at its peak within 30-60 minutes after exercise, but you should focus on recovery nutrition in the 24-48 hours after exercise, particularly if it was intense and/or prolonged.

SARA RICHTER, MS
Sr. Manager Nutrition Education at Isagenix International