

# Power up your game with Whole Food Snacks

By Kelly Springer, MS, RD, CDN

With your busy schedule, and the number of calories you burn in your sport, you need an arsenal of healthy snacks to choose from to sustain yourself. Make sure you have both healthy carbohydrate and protein choices on hand.



## What Protein to Choose:

Proteins help in the muscle recovery process. I turn to raw nuts, hard-boiled eggs, cottage cheese, yogurt, and tuna for quick and healthy snacks.

And, I always recommend milk for athletes – it's a great recovery drink (chocolate milk is great, as well!). Several research studies have shown that milk can speed recovery. A 2018 [study](#), for example, concluded that female athletes who consumed milk after intense workouts involving sprinting and jumping recovered better and faster than female athletes who consumed a comparable carbohydrate sports recovery drink.

## What Carbohydrates to Choose:

Load up on veggies and fruit as much as possible; they are filled with antioxidants which help your muscles recover and can improve performance. Here are some of my favorites:

- Carrot sticks, snap peas, green beans, celery, bell peppers, and radishes are so yummy with hummus.
- Popcorn... pop it yourself, lightly salt it, and guess what? It's a whole grain!
- Go crazy over citrus fruits! A 2018 [study](#) showed that cyclists who supplemented with citrus fruit for four weeks had a five percent higher power output than cyclists given a placebo.

## Carbohydrate and Protein Power Combo Recipe - Smoothie Bowl

**1** Pull out your blender and add 1½ cups of any frozen fruit.

**2** Add ½ cup of yogurt. If you want extra protein, try Greek yogurt. Steer clear of yogurts with a lot of added sugar.

**3** Add a cup of skim milk.

**4** Toss in some spinach, nuts, or seeds. Add-ins like spinach are very tasteless and give you an extra serving of vegetables!

**5** Lightly blend; remember you're eating this so it doesn't need to be a drinkable consistency.

**6** Pour into a bowl and add toppings like sliced fruit, coconut flakes, granola, and dark chocolate!



When you choose whole food snacks, your resulting sports performance will wow you!



Kelly Springer is the founder of Kelly's Choice. Learn more at [Kellyschoice.org](http://Kellyschoice.org).