



# Interview with ADANE Sports Nutrition Advisory Panelist Dan Liburd, NBA Basketball Strength Coach

**Let's start by talking about you. Tell me about yourself and your experience working with professional athletes.**

I have the honor and privilege of working as a Strength and Conditioning Coach in the National Basketball Association (NBA). I've also accumulated over a decade of experience working with professional athletes in both the National Football League (NFL) and NBA as a Strength and Conditioning Coach. This experience has given me great perspective and knowledge in designing, implementing and executing strength and conditioning and sport science programs for various athletic populations. As a strength coach, I also have experience in designing and overseeing team nutrition and dietary programs. I work collaboratively with chefs and medical and performance staff to create positive change for team and individual athlete performance.

**As a Strength and Conditioning Coach, you work hands-on with the athletes. What have you found to be the most common fueling mistake?**

Athletes often have misconceptions on the importance and value of a carbohydrate-rich diet for performance. Carbohydrates are an important supply of energy and immediate fuel source for the body's cells, tissues and overall function. Restricting carbohydrate sources for long periods of time can have negative effects on energy levels and performance. One of the most effective strategies for improving sport performance is to focus on nutritious carbohydrates before exercise. Carbohydrate consumption prior to training and competition helps to support mental performance, as well as physical performance. It also preserves the fuel used by muscles and helps support recovery from sports activity. For some specific ideas on what to eat before exercise, check out this post on [pre-game fueling](#).

**We know that hydration is important. Do you give the same hydration recommendations to all athletes? What do you suggest that they hydrate with during exercise?**

As a performance specialist, my focus is constantly centered on strategies aimed at improving an athlete's overall potential to function at a high level. Adequate hydration for sports activity is an essential resource for high performance. During exercise, the body naturally requires more water. This is due to the increased rate of energy processes that result from muscle function, respiration and body temperature control. We often recommend a variety of hydration sources that includes water, carbohydrates and electrolytes to help refuel and replenish valuable resources for optimal performance. Recommendations are individualized to each athlete based on a number of factors that include body size, duration of play and preference. For more guidance on what to drink during activity, check out this article on [proper hydration during activity](#).

**What about recovery nutrition? Do you recommend athletes eat or drink something after they train or participate in a game?**

Recovery nutrition strategies often center on replenishing important macronutrients such as carbohydrates and protein. Consumption of carbohydrates post activity is important to replenish energy and the fuel needed for future performance. Recovery nutrition also includes protein and amino acids which are needed to produce and repair important molecules in our body – like muscle cells, enzymes, hormones, neurotransmitters, and antibodies. Good recovery nutrition strategies are centered on carbohydrate and protein to replace worn out cells and support restoration of energy for growth and repair. A great carbohydrate/protein refuel beverage we often use with our athletes is chocolate milk. That's because it naturally contains a 3:1 carbohydrate to protein ratio, which is a good balance of those macronutrients to help recover after exercise.

**If you had one piece of advice for high school athletes who hope to play collegiate or professional sports one day, what would it be?**

A quote that I often refer to is one by Waldo Tobler –

**“Everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things.”**

Your social and physical environment plays an instrumental role in your road to success. The quote suggests that the practices, the people and even the foods that are near you are related to you and your potential. These items have a natural influence and also impact your interests, goals and ultimately your health. In the case of nutrition, the old adage “you are what you eat” holds true and is a powerful reflection of this idea. If you are constantly making poor food choices, then you can be sure that they will result in poor results and move you away from reaching your goals. Consider strategies to improve your environment and the resources near you, so that you are more likely to reach your goal.



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