

FOOD FOR RUGBY

NUTRITION FOR MATCH OFFICIALS

Match officials need to be physically fit and mentally sharp to make quick decisions on the field.



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01. INTRODUCTION

Match officials need to be physically fit and mentally sharp to make quick decisions on the field. The nutrition requirements match officials have can be high, so adequate nutrition is essential to ensure sufficient energy to focus and perform optimally. This toolkit highlights some important nutrition considerations for match officials to keep in mind on a daily basis and during match day.







02. DAILY INTAKE

The amount of food needed will depend on your body weight, height, gender, and activity level. You should aim to consume three main meals per day, with snacks in between containing protein to keep your energy levels topped up and your muscles recovering optimally.

Like any athlete, it is important that you prioritise having a balanced diet that provides sufficient macro and micronutrients to stay healthy, and to cover the demands of your training sessions and matches.

You can refer to the **Nutrition Fundamentals** toolkit to understand more about balanced diets and macronutrient requirements for rugby.

A. CARBOHYDRATES

You should aim to consume around 3-5 grams of carbohydrates per kilogram of body weight per day depending on activity levels. This should come from mostly complex carbohydrates:

- Whole grain bread and pasta
- Rice
- Potatoes
- Fruits

B. PROTEIN

Protein helps repair and build muscle tissue. You should aim to consume around 1.5 to 2.0 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight per day. Good sources of protein include:

- Lean meat
- 🥕 Fish
- 🎤 Eggs
- Dairy products

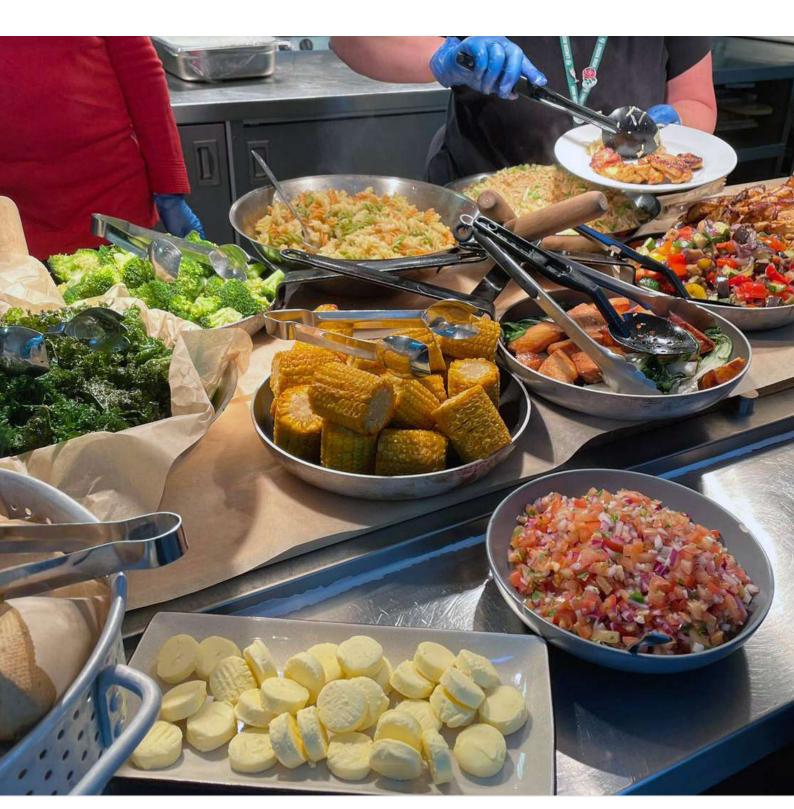
Plant based sources:

- 🏂 Beans
- 🥕 Lentils
- Tofu



C. FAT

In addition to carbohydrates and protein, the diet should also include healthy fats. Your requirements will depend on your overall energy intake goals but they should provide at least 30% of your total caloric intake. Fats are essential for brain health and can help to reduce inflammation in the body. Some food sources include nuts, seeds, avocado, olives, and olive oil.







03. MATCH-DAY TIMELINE

REMEMBER: Recent studies have highlighted the matchday loads on referees, where they showed average distance covered was **7 km**!



MATCHDAY -1 EVENING MEAL

A healthy balanced plate of food, a good portion of protein, vegetables, and carbohydrates with some added healthy fats.

MATCHDAY -1 PRE-BED SNACK

A snack before going to bed is an extra opportunity to provide additional nutrients so your body is prepared for the big day! Ideally, opt for proteincontaining snacks with some additional carbohydrates. A good snack to have the night before a match could be a yoghurt bowl with berries or a banana protein smoothie.

MATCHDAY Breakfast

This is important because it is the first meal of the day that breaks the overnight fast. Skipping breakfast before matches can mean the time between the last meal can be over 12 hours! This could mean that the body will have to look for other energy stores, such as protein broken down from the muscle.

PRE-MATCH MEAL

Depending on KO time you may opt for a light lunch, or in some cases this could be the prematch meal 3-4 hours prior to KO. Therefore, the aim is to consume an easily digestible meal, rich in carbohydrates (1-2 g per kilo of your body weight) to top up energy levels as well as protein to support muscle regeneration.



DURING MATCH

It can be helpful to have small snacks during breaks to maintain energy levels high. Have cereal bars and fruits available in case you need an energy top-up at half-time.

Remember your hydration is very important for optimal performance as well. Aim to drink fluids frequently throughout the game. These can be a combination of water and sports drinks.

POST-MATCH MEAL

As the work involves periods of high intensities, with high distances covered, sore muscles in the hours and days after a game are inevitable. Nutrition can help adapt to the demands and repair and recover quicker. Ideally this should be consumed as soon as possible with the focus on adequate carbohydrates and protein to maximise repair and recovery.





04. TOP TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Eat sources of carbohydrates that are rich in fibre. Carbohydrates are the predominant energy source used in high intensity and intermittent activity. The body can only store a limited amount of carbohydrates; thus, it is essential this is replaced post-match. If not, you may have a lack of energy and can't meet the demands of training and/or match day.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Keeping hydrated is important as it is possible to lose up to 2 litres (about 4 pints) in sweat in an hour of exercise, especially in the heat. Even in winter when it is cold and wet you are likely to lose a lot of fluid through sweating. When this is not replaced, you can become dehydrated, which may impact performance. This means turning up match-day hydration by drinking regularly throughout the day and with meals.
- Eat a balanced diet. To stay healthy and train hard, you are recommended to consume plenty of vitamins and minerals, this is achieved by eating a wide variety of whole fresh foods, fruits, and vegetables.







05. REFERENCES & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Nutrition for Match is published by England Rugby.

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