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News For

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Nutrition Between Prelims And Finals

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Question: In a preliminary/finals meet, an age group swimmer might finish the last preliminary event at 3 PM and return to the pool at 5 PM to warm up for the finals, which are at 6 PM. What would be the best nutrition for this swimmer?

Answer: The best nutrition for this swimmer depends on what the swimmer eats the morning of the competition. If he or she eats a large breakfast that contains at least 200 to 300 grams of carbohydrate, the swimmer will need mainly water and a small amount of carbohydrate, which can be provided by a fluid replacement and energy drink or fruit juice.

If he or she didn't eat a high carbohydrate breakfast, the swimmer will need to eat carbohydrate after the 4 PM event to provide energy for the warm up and finals. The swimmer should eat an amount of carbohydrate, in grams, equal to 75% of his or her body weight within 15 minutes of the completion of the preliminary event and again 1 hour later. For example, a 100 pound swimmer should eat 75 grams (0.75×100 pounds) of carbohydrate by 4:15 PM and another 75 grams of carbohydrate at approximately 5 PM.

Liquid or solid forms of carbohydrate can be eaten: however, liquids are usually better tolerated and are more quickly digested. The amount of carbohydrate needed in the example above, 75 grams, is provided by 4 apples, 3 bananas, or 3 bagels.