



Referee Nutrition FAQ

What should I eat the night before a game?

Focus on carbohydrate foods the night before a game to fill up the fuel tank with energy. At dinner, ensure at least 1/3 of your dinner plate is covered in carbohydrate food such as potato, sweet potato, rice or pasta.

Before bed, if you're hungry, have another carbohydrate snack such as a hot chocolate, a slice of wholegrain toast, or a banana.

What should I eat while I'm travelling to the game?

If you're travelling the morning of the game, make sure you take a pit-stop for your pre-match meal about 3.5 hours before KO. Travelling in airports and on motorways, be prepared with your own snacks so you don't fall foul of unhealthy convenience foods that won't help your performance. Stock up on water, dried fruits and nuts, flapjacks and fruit in the car. In shops and airports, pick up yoghurts, fruit, sushi, salads, pre-made sandwiches (aim for <500kcal), and milk. Porridge is a great breakfast/snack that you should be able to get in most airports.

What should I eat before a match?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZKihx2RYddw&feature=youtu.be&list=PLi8yDahGQ91SNtQTHOa9n1_MdrvVBgiSc

What should I eat during a match?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWJfdu35vpM&feature=youtu.be&list=PLi8yDahGQ91SNtQTHOa9n1_MdrvVBgiSc

What should I eat after a match?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8IMy6yZLf4&list=PLi8yDahGQ91SNtQTHOa9n1_MdrvVBgiSc&index=4

What should I eat travelling home from a game?

On the journey home, the focus should be on regular protein to repair your muscles. Referees need 20-30g of protein every 3-4 hours in the 2 days after a game to make sure their muscles recover properly. Assuming you eat a post-match meal straight after the game, you'll need to include another protein/carbohydrate snack about 3-4 hours later on your journey home. A pint of milk and a banana is a great snack that you can pick up at any shop on the way home or alternatively, a protein shake and cereal bar might be a handy alternative for international travel.





Do I need to take protein supplements?

Protein is essential for muscle growth and repair. It mainly comes from food sources such as chicken, tuna, milk, eggs, other fish and meats, with smaller amounts in vegetarian sources like nuts, beans, lentils and soya products. Protein supplements are made from milk originally. They are a very convenient source of protein and might be handy while travelling or if you have a hectic work/refereeing schedule. Protein at breakfast, lunch and dinner should ideally be from food sources, while protein supplements may be useful straight after training, if you're on the go, or before bed.

What foods / vitamins should I take to keep immune system boosted?

Aim for at least 5 portions of fruit and veg every day, which are full of vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients and antioxidants that are essential for your immune system and staying healthy.

A vitamin and mineral supplement may be useful during times of heavy training, travelling a lot and in-season. For referees, who are not drug tested, a multivitamin from a reputable brand should supply you with enough extra vitamins and minerals to give you an 'insurance policy' during these times of heavy training and travel.

Remember that your immune system is weakened straight after a training session/match so make sure you only drink from your own bottle, and you eat your recovery drink/shake straight away after training to fuel your immune system, and you wash your hands before eating post-match.

What foods should I avoid?

There are no foods that you should avoid. Be sensible, aim to eat a whole food diet and you won't go too far wrong. Preparing your own food means you have total control over your diet, while eating out leaves you at the mercy of chefs. See the following video for enjoying healthier take-outs <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hrWUsUOe9Y&index=18&list=PLi8yDahGQ91SNtQTHOa9n1MdrvVBgiSc>





Healthy Snack Options

Popcorn (1 pint glass full) or 1 bag <i>salted</i> popcorn	Good source of carbohydrate, and salt (when take with water) can be useful to help you rehydrate after games.
<i>Low fat</i> natural yoghurt	All types. 1 portion = 125g. You can add in some chopped fruit or seeds or half a teaspoon of honey.
<i>Low Fat</i> Greek Yoghurt	Make sure it is low fat. Real Greek yoghurt should also have around 8g/100g protein.
Low fat/diet yoghurts with less than 70kcal per 100g.	See list below: Diet Irish yogurts, Muller lite Greek style (lemon or coconut), Danone Shape, Weight watchers fromage frais, Liberté Greek yoghurts, Tesco healthy living yoghurts, Activia 0% fat (make sure it says 0% fat on it!)
Nuts	Aim for 2 handfuls (50g) per day. Use raw nuts (not roasted or salted or candied etc.) Always try and eat nuts that have the skins on (unblanched). This will increase the fibre content. Choose from almonds, brazil nuts, hazelnuts, cashews, walnuts, pistachios and pecans.
Fruit	All fruit. Aim for 3 portions a day. For hydration around games choose juicy fruits e.g. oranges, pineapple, melon. No more than 1 banana per day on non-training days.
Carrot sticks and <i>low fat</i> hummus	
Apple slices	
Veg	Snack on baby tomatoes and cucumber wedges if you're feeling very pious!
No added sugar diluting juice.	

Do I need a blood test to diagnose a food intolerance?

There is no blood/hair/nail test to diagnose food intolerances. In fact there is no test at all! The only way to diagnose a food intolerance is by excluding the food from your diet and reintroducing it, and measuring the symptoms. If you feel that you have a food intolerance that is having a big impact on your life, you should visit a dietitian who is trained in the low FODMAP diet. You can get a referral through your GP, or you can find a list of private dietitians at <https://www.indi.ie/find-a-dietitian.html>





DAILY CLEAN DIET CHECKLIST

- More than 2-3 pieces of fruit.
- More than 2-3 portions of vegetables including at least 1 portion leafy greens.
- 3 portions of calcium foods.
- Wholegrains at each meal e.g. porridge, brown rice, wholegrain bread.
- Nuts and seeds regularly.
- Oily fish once per week e.g. mackrel salmon, trout.

A simple rule of thumb...your plate at every meal should consist of:

1/3 fruit and veg

1/3 wholegrain carbohydrate foods (more directly before training/matches)

1/3 meat, eggs, dairy, nuts and vegetarian proteins sources



Wk	Goal	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Wk 1	5-a-day							
Wk 2	5-a-day							
Wk 3	5-a-day							
Non-food based reward: e.g. DVD, trip, clothes								

Top Food Choices: Protein Snacks

Options containing 20g protein



DIY protein snacks

Protein & seed bars
(30mins, makes 10)
35g Nuts, 10g Seeds
180g Oats, 40g Honey
4g Cinnamon
20g Coconut oil



High protein smoothie/
yoghurt pot
(2 mins, makes 1)
125ml Total 0% Greek yoghurt
75ml Skimmed milk
30g Frozen berries
Optional: nuts & seeds



Mini omelette bites
(10 mins, makes 6)
6 Eggs
2 tbsp skimmed milk
Small bunch chives
Filling of choice (e.g. salmon/ ham/ feta/ veg)





Match Day Nutrition

Focus: *Fluids, Carbohydrate, Recovery*

Match day morning

- Drink fluids first thing in the morning.

Breakfast

- 500mls water + 1 Dioralyte
- Include cereal/porridge, toast/pancake and a glass of fruit juice/smoothie

Pre-match meal 3.5hr before

- Fuel with carbohydrate e.g. cereal, toast, pancake, smoothie, spaghetti bolognese with pasta, chicken and potatoes etc.
- Continue to drink fluids

Travel to Pitch

- Aim to drink 1 x 500ml bottle of water + 1 x Dioralyte on the journey to the match venue
- Snack on banana/cereal bars

Warm Up

- Continue to drink fluids

Match

- Drink fluids (water or lucozade sport) at every break in play

Half time

- Drink 1/2 bottle lucozade sport
- Eat 4 jellies or 1 gel
- Take 1 caffeine gum as necessary

Full time

- Recovery shake immediately after match E.g. 500mls chocolate milk, Milk & banana
- Post match meal

