



Health and Performance Nutrition Principles

Fighting fires can be both a demanding and rewarding field of expertise. Taking care of your specific nutrition needs will increase your potential on your job and help you to maintain energy after your shift is over. The principles below are geared towards meeting your individual nutrition needs, improving sharp mental focus, supporting your energy levels and mood, and assisting with combating joint and muscle pain.

1 hydration

Choose water as your primary beverage. On average you'll need 64-100 oz of water per day. Increased activity, sweating and extreme temperatures may increase these needs. Dehydration significantly impairs performance and is one of the most common causes of headaches and fatigue. Proper hydration plays a critical role in mental performance, reflexes, and safety. Consume 16 oz of water prior to training and 4-6 oz of fluid every 15 minutes of exercise.

2 feed your brain

Studies suggest that many of the foods we eat have significant benefits for our mental health including reduced brain fog, heightened focus and energy, and decreased anxiety and depression. Include foods in your diet that boost your mental focus like wild caught salmon, chia seeds, spinach, berries, avocado, and dark chocolate.

3 know your oils

Choose healthy oils like olive oil, avocado oil, and coconut oil. Healthy fats in these oils support mental focus, increase vitamin absorption, and support appetite control. Avoid oils that increase inflammation like soybean oil, canola oil, and corn oil. Over time, inflammation can impair the mobility and joint movement vital in police work.

4 avoid added sugar

Added sugars contribute to many health issues like high blood sugar and high blood pressure. Additionally, excess sugar can decrease your immune system and increase your waist circumference. Artificial sweeteners like aspartame and sucralose can negatively impact your metabolism. Opt for natural sweeteners like stevia and monk fruit when needed.

5 get real

The more processed a food is, the more of a burden it is on your body to digest and absorb. Focus on eating minimally processed foods that are close to how they are found in nature. Think fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds, meat and fish to name a few. Look for short simple ingredient lists when choosing a food in a package.

6 consume protein

After an intense physical shift, your body needs protein to stop muscle breakdown and promote muscle repair. If you don't plan to consume a protein rich meal within 1 hour following intense activity, you may want to consider supplementing a protein shake made with whey protein or collagen peptides.

7 prioritize vegetables

Did you know that vegetables provide your body with potent antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, and metabolism boosting properties? A healthy diet cannot exist without vegetables. Vegetables assist your body in detoxifying and nourish the cells in every system of your body. Make it a priority to get 3-5 servings of vegetables per day.

8 meal prep

Batch cook some meat and vegetables to have quick and easy lunch and dinner options throughout the week. Pack healthy snacks such as fruits and nuts to use for fuel during your shift and reduce impulse eating unhealthy convenience foods. Create a grocery list so you know exactly what you need to get through a week of healthy eating.

9 replenish

A high quality drink or drink mix that includes both carbohydrates and electrolytes is recommended after physical activity lasting longer than 60 minutes or exposure to extreme temperatures. Examples of electrolytes include calcium, chloride, magnesium, phosphate, potassium, and sodium. Electrolytes are needed to maintain an even balance for your body to function properly.

10 grains can inflame

Despite the popular thought that grains are healthy, grains can inflame the whole body and contain addictive characteristics that drive appetite. Processed grains generate a high insulin response and can contribute to obesity and other concerns. The gluten, lectin, and phytic acid found in grains have been shown to inflame the intestinal tract, cause an overgrowth of bad gut bacteria, and decrease nutrient absorption.

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www.brgeneral.org/fdvp

For education and information purposes only. Before starting any nutrition or fitness program, please speak to your primary care physician or a Baton Rouge General healthcare provider.



Healthy Foods

Healthy eating means embracing foods like vegetables, fruits, proteins and healthy fats while cutting back on grains, starches, added sugars, and unhealthy oils. This process is about moving your body closer to your original “default” settings and reducing the cravings for unhealthy foods. Individuals learn to appreciate food and food quality and cut back on processed and refined foods. This is not intended to be another rigid, generic diet. Also, please note this list is not all inclusive. For more information, be sure to check out www.brgeneral.org/fdvp.

VEGETABLES

Acorn Squash
Artichoke
Arugula
Asparagus
Beets
Bok Choy
Broccoli
Broccolini
Broccoli Rabe
Brussels Sprouts
Butternut Squash
Cassava
Cauliflower
Collard Greens
Napa Cabbage
Carrots
Celery
Cucumber
Eggplant
Green Beans
Kale
Kohlrabi
Leeks
Lettuce
Mushrooms
Okra
Onions
Parsnips
Peppers
Plantain
Pumpkin
Radish

Snap Peas
Snow Peas
Spaghetti Squash
Spinach
Sprouts
Sweet Potato
Swiss Chard
Tomato
Turnips
Turnip Greens
White Potato
Yellow Squash
Zucchini

LEGUMES

Black Beans
Broad/Fava Beans
Butter Beans
Chickpeas
Field Peas
Green Peas

Note: 1/2 cup portions; soak beans for 24 hours prior to cooking

FRUIT

Apples
Apricots
Bananas
Blackberries
Blueberries
Cherries
Figs
Grapefruit
Grapes
Kiwi
Lemons/Limes
Mangos
Melon
Oranges
Nectarines
Papaya
Peaches
Pears
Pineapples
Plums
Raspberries
Strawberries
Tangerines
Watermelon

FLOURS

Almond
Arrowroot
Cassava
Coconut
Plantain
Tapioca

FAT SOURCES

Almonds/Almond Flour
Avocado
Avocado Oil
Brazil Nuts
Cashews
Butter/Ghee
Coconut Butter
Coconut Flour
Coconut Oil
Egg Yolks
Flax Seeds
Hazelnuts
High Quality Animal Fat
Macadamia Nuts
Macadamia Oil
Natural Nut Butters
Natural Seed Butters
Olives
Olive Oil
Palm Oil
Pecans
Pine Nuts
Pistachios
Pumpkin Seeds
Sesame Seeds
Sesame Oil
Sunflower Seeds
Unsweetened Coconut Flakes

PROTEIN

Beef/Bison, Buffalo
Beef Protein Powder
Collagen Peptides
Eggs/Egg Whites
Egg White Protein Powder
Fish/Seafood, Shellfish
Organ Meats
Other Meats (*Wild Boar, Ostrich, Lamb, Elk, Venison, Goat, Moose*)
Pork
Poultry (*Chicken, Turkey, Duck, Quail, Pheasant*)
Bacon/Sausage/Jerky (*Preservative free*)

BEVERAGES

Fruit Infused Water
Coffee
Unsweetened Almond Milk
Unsweetened Coconut Milk
Unsweetened Tea
Water (*Plain & Sparkling*)

HERBS & SPICES

Note: All fresh herbs and spices are encouraged. Read the label on pre-mixed spices and seasonings

Optional Foods

These foods lie in a gray area. Individual goals and tolerances should be assessed before deciding whether to include these foods daily. This list is not all inclusive.

DAIRY*

Cottage Cheese
Cream Cheese
Heavy Whipping Cream
Goat Cheese
Greek Yogurt (*unflavored*)
Kefir
Natural Cheeses
Sour Cream
Whey
Whole Milk

GRAINS

Rice
Steel Cut Oats
Quinoa

SWEETENERS

Coconut Sugar
Erythritol
Honey (*raw*)
Maple Syrup
Molasses
Stevia (*Green Leaf or Extract*)
Monk Fruit

**Whole fat dairy is preferred*

Foods to Avoid

These foods are considered inflammatory and often are intolerable. Foods in this category are often highly processed and can lead to elevated blood sugar levels. Avoiding these foods has been proven beneficial and can aid in a reduction of inflammation in the body. Be sure to read food labels carefully to ensure your food doesn't contain the ingredients listed.

SWEETENERS

Acesulfame K
Agave Nectar
Aspartame
Barley Malt
Beet Sugar
Brown Rice Syrup
Brown Sugar
Cane Sugar
Cane Juice Crystals
Confectioner Sugar
Caramel
Corn Syrup/Solids
Dextrose
Fructose
Fruit Juice Concentrate
Glucose
High Fructose Corn Syrup
Invert Sugar
Malt Syrup
Maltitol
Maltodextrin
Maltose
Mannitol
Raw Sugar
Rice Syrup
Saccharin
Sorbitol
Sorghum Syrup
Sucralose
Sucrose
Sugar

GRAINS

Barley
Corn (*Maize, Grits, Popcorn*)
Instant Oats
Rye
Sorghum
Wheat (*Bulgur, Cream of Wheat, Durum, Grabam, Kamut*)

LEGUMES

Baked Beans
Boston Beans
Soft Drinks
Diet Soft Drinks
Alcohol

OILS

Canola Oil
Corn Oil
Cottonseed Oil
Grapeseed Oil
Hydrogenated Oils
Peanut Oil
Safflower Oil
Soybean Oil
Sunflower Oil
Vegetable Oil

SOY & ITS ALTERNATIVES

Edamame
Hydrolyzed Soy Protein
Miso
Shoyu Sauce
Soy Lecithin
Soy Milk
Soy Protein Isolate
Soy Sauce
Soybeans
Soybean Curd
Soybean Granules
Tamari
Tempeh
Textured Vegetable Protein
Tofu

ADDITIVES & PRESERVATIVES

Artificial Color/Flavor
Benzoic Acid
BHA/BHT
Biphenyl
Bulking Agents
Emulsifier
Hydrolyzed Plant Protein
Mono- & Diglycerides
MSG
Shortening
Sodium Benzoate
Sodium Nitrate/Nitrite
Stabilizer
Thickener