

A0ASM 2026


Special Considerations for Athletes in the Context of the New Dietary Guidelines

Jasmine Miller, MS, Certified Nutritionist
Sendoa Nutrition & Coaching, LLC

1

Financial Disclosures

- No financial disclosures
- Private sports nutrition practice information can be found at www.sendoanutrition.com
- Email contact: jasmine@sendoanutrition.com

 2026 Annual Clinical Conference

2

Credentials & Athletic Achievements

- Masters in Human Nutrition & Functional Medicine from University of Western States
- Certified NASM Sports Nutritionist
- Level I USA Triathlon Coach
- UESCA Certified Run Coach
- 3 x IRONMAN, 2 x IRONMAN 70.3 World Championship qualifier, Boston Marathon qualifier, numerous podium achievements in everything from the 5k to Half Ironman (70.3)distance events.

 2026 Annual Clinical Conference

3

Learning Objectives

- At the end of this session, participants will be able to: better understand the nutrient needs for athletes to support not only athletic performance and but general health as well. Participants will understand the limitations of the most recent updated U.S. Dietary Guidelines in the context of athletic performance.
- Participants will also gain understanding of baseline macronutrient needs for athletes.

4

Topics to be Covered

- Notable changes:
 - No longer using MyPlate – back to a pyramid
 - Increase in baseline protein recommendations from the RDA of 0.8g/kg to 1.2-1.6g/kg, but this still may be too low for athletes.
 - Carbohydrate servings reduced from 6 down to 2-4 per day, putting most athletes at risk of inadequate fueling.
 - Greater emphasis on saturated fats and full fat dairy may put greater strain on the gut microbiome.
- Unchanged:
 - servings of fruits of vegetables remain relatively unchanged but may not be sufficient in the context of higher protein intake.
 - More fruits & vegetables reduces risk of chronic disease.

5

MyPlate vs New Food Pyramid

6

Athlete's Plates - <https://www.usopc.org/nutrition>

The Athlete's Plates are tools for you to better adjust your eating to the physical demands of your sport!

EASY An easy day may contain just an easy workout or tapering without the need to load up for competition with energy and nutrients. Easy day meals may also apply to athletes trying to lose weight and athletes in sports requiring less energy (calories) due to the nature of their sport.

MODERATE A moderate day may be one where you train twice but focus on technical skill in one workout and on endurance or strength in the other. The moderate day should be your baseline from where you adjust your plate down (less) or up (more).

HARD A hard day contains at least 2 workouts that are relatively hard or competition. If your competition requires extra fuel from carbohydrates, use this plate to load up in the days before, throughout, and after the event day.



The Athlete's Plates are a collaboration between the United States Olympic Committee Sport Dietitians and the University of Colorado (UCSC) Sport Nutrition Graduate Program.
For educational use only. Please read and use front and back of all products.

2026 Annual Clinical Conference

7

Protein

- The International Society of Sports Nutrition (ISSN) states that 1.4-2.0g/kg is sufficient for most individuals, but that 2.3-3.1g/kg may be required during hypocaloric states.³
- Previously protein recommendations were based on the RDA of 0.8g/kg and the new guidelines are 1.2-1.6g/kg.²
- Antonio & colleagues (2016) performed a one year cross over study investigating the effects of consuming a high protein diet (>3g/kg/day).⁴ They observed no harmful effects on blood lipids, liver markers or kidney function.

2026 Annual Clinical Conference

8

Protein

- A higher protein diet must be accompanied by appropriate fiber and carbohydrate intake to support the gut microbiome.
- Research by Russell & colleagues (2011) and Hughes & colleagues (2000) reveal the importance of fiber and carbohydrate intake in the context of higher protein diets to reduce negative impacts on colonic health.^{5&6}

2026 Annual Clinical Conference

9

Fruits & Vegetables (dietary fiber)

- Both the previous and current DGA fall short on recommendations for fruit and vegetable consumption.
- 2020-2025 DGA recommended 2.5 servings of vegetables and 2 servings of fruit per day.¹
- 2025-2030 DGA recommends 3 servings of vegetables and 2 servings of fruit per day.²
- Following the DGA only provides about 12-20g of dietary fiber, which is not sufficient to support gut health in the context of higher protein intake.^{5&6}



2026 Annual Clinical Conference

10

Fruits & Vegetables (dietary fiber)

- Additionally, there is ample evidence to support the benefits of fruit and vegetable intake.^{7&8}
- McCall et al. (2009) observed improvements in microvascular function in a dose dependent manner. For every 1-portion increase they found a 6.2% improvement in forearm blood flow.⁷
- A 2012 critical review found convincing evidence that consumption of fruits & vegetables reduces risk of diseases such as T2DM, CHD, IBD, RA, cancer, stroke, asthma, and dementia.⁸



2026 Annual Clinical Conference

11

Saturated Fats & Gut Health

- The updated DGA emphasizes including full fat dairy and does not emphasize the importance of balancing fat intake.
- This emphasis on foods higher in saturated fat (e.g. full fat dairy, beef tallow, butter, etc..) could be even more problematic to athletes who already struggle to maintain optimal gut health.
- A systematic review by Wolters & colleagues (2019) found that higher intakes of saturated fatty acids may negatively affect microbiota. Additionally, diets high in monounsaturated fatty acids may decrease total bacteria numbers.⁹



2026 Annual Clinical Conference

12

Carbohydrates

- The new DGA changed the recommended servings of grains/starches from 6 servings down to 2-4 servings per day. This is not enough to support most athletes.
- Most athletes require anywhere from 3-8g/kg of CHO per day, and ultra endurance athletes require as much as 10-12g/kg/d.¹⁰
- One serving of grains/cereals/bread is equivalent to about 20-25g of CHO. The upper end of 4 servings only equates to about 100g of carbohydrates.



2026 Annual Clinical Conference

13

Carbohydrates

- For an athlete weighing 68kg (150lbs) he/she would require 204g of carbohydrates if they consumed the very lowest range of 3g/kg.
- Even when fruit and vegetable servings are added to grain servings, CHO recommendations based on DGA fail to meet the needs of most athletes.
- While research on CHO intake and athletic performance has mixed findings^{11&12}, proper CHO intake remains critical to maintaining efficiency and economy.¹³



2026 Annual Clinical Conference

14

Macronutrient Overview

- Strength/power athletes:
 - Carbohydrates: 3-5g/kg/day
 - Protein: 1.8-2.0g/kg/day - but can be as high as 3+g/kg/day
 - Fats: 0.7-2.2g/kg/day, depending on total caloric needs.
- Endurance athletes:
 - Carbohydrates: 6-10g/kg/day
 - Protein: 1.4-1.8g/kg/day
 - Fats: 0.7-2.2g/kg/day, depending on total caloric needs.

*Injured Athletes may benefit from increased protein consumption¹⁴



2026 Annual Clinical Conference

15
