Injuries can be emotionally and physically frustrating for athletes. Focusing on what you ‘can do’ rather than what you cannot, can help. Choosing what you eat is one of those things you ‘can do’. Adjusting your diet to provide the right nutrients for healing can speed up your recovery.

- **Herbs**
  - Turmeric, garlic, cocoa, green tea
  - All contain anti-inflammatory compounds.
  - For therapeutic doses of herbs and spices, you typically need to take them in pill-form.

- **Minerals**
  - Iron: Beans, dark green leafy vegetables, whole grain and enriched breads, fortified breakfast cereals
  - Zinc: 15-30 mg/day
  - Calcium: 1000-1300 mg/day

- **Oils (Plant & Fish)**
  - 2-3 fish meals per week is ideal
  - Pacific salmon, barramundi, and albacore tuna
  - Good oils have an anti-inflammatory effect
  - Olive and canola oils, peanut butter, nuts, nut butters, ground flaxseeds, flax oil, avocado

- **Vitamins**
  - Real food has more nutrition than a vitamin pill
  - Colorful fruits and vegetables have powerful anti-oxidants that knock down inflammation.
  - Smoothies work great to incorporate fruits and veggies in your diet.

- **Protein**
  - Lean meats, legumes, nuts, low-fat dairy
  - Protein gets broken down into the amino acids needed to repair damaged muscles.
  - Steady stream of amino acids to promote healing.
  - Lean meats, etc. is a better source of amino acids than supplements.

- **Carbohydrates**
  - Whole Grains, fruits, vegetables
  - Carbs provide your body fuel so protein can be used to heal.
  - Without enough carbs, your body will burn protein for fuel.

Strive to maintain a high quality food intake every day. This creates a reserve of vitamins and minerals, ready and waiting, to be put into action if injury does occur. The junk food junkie who gets a serious sports injury has a big disadvantage. Eat smart!

---

Stanford Children’s Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Center
(844) 41 - ORTHO or (844) 41- 7846
ortho.stanfordchildrens.org