

Travel Nutrition

Everything you need to know as an athlete



Plan Ahead

Follow a checklist.

Plan all your meals and snacks in advance.

Bring back-up foods in case travel is delayed or availability of food at your destination is not adequate.

Research what the food will be like at your destination and plan some back-up options.

Ensure you are well rested and hydrated in the days leading up to travel.



Travel

Prioritise sleep and rest during travel.

Set watch to local time on boarding the plane.

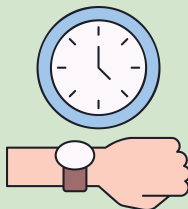
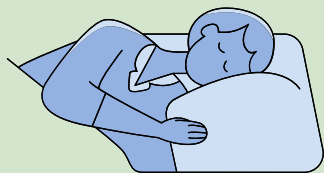
Fill up a water bottle when through security, and stay hydrated throughout.

Ensure you can be self-sufficient for your food and hydration needs.

Avoid boredom eating.

Avoid caffeine after 4pm at the time of your destination.

Avoid alcohol.



On Arrival

Acclimatise to the new time zone to minimise jet lag symptoms.

Adopt a good sleep routine upon arrival to maximise recovery and immunity.

If concerned about the availability/convenience of fresh fruit and veg, consider taking a daily multivitamin (Informed Sport certified).



Travel / Kitbag Packing List

Foods

- ☐ Porridge Oats
- ☐ Instant noodles
- ☐ Granola
- ☐ Cereal Bars
- ☐ Jam/honey
- ☐ Babybel cheese
- ☐ Tuna/salmon pots
- ☐ Microwave rice/grains
- ☐ Jafa cakes
- ☐ Beef jerky



Equipment

- ☐ Cutlery
- ☐ Cool bag
- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Shaker
- ☐ Lunchbox



Hydration

- ☐ Tea/Coffee (variety)
- ☐ Hot Chocolate
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Electrolyte tablets
- ☐ UHT milk sachets



Immune support

- ☐ Hand sanitiser
- ☐ First defence nasal spray
- ☐ Anti-bac wipes
- ☐ Face mask
- ☐ Milton tablets to clean bottles



Other

- ☐ Compression tights/socks
- ☐ Eye mask
- ☐ Ear plugs
- ☐ Travel pillow
- ☐ Entertainment



Jet Lag - Solutions

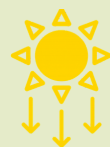
- 1 • Good sleep prior to journey



- 2 • Maintain good hydration (fluids/electrolytes), particularly on longer flights



- 3 • Get some natural light exposure in the morning at destination



- 4 • Synchronise with destination asap by starting to shift bed and meal times 30-60 mins per day in the lead up to travel - caffeine 200mg to support wakefulness (can start 5 days before travel)



- 5 • Optional - melatonin 1-3 mg/daily to support a phase advance on eastward travel (Informed Sport)



Example step by step preparation guide

- based on 5-6hr eastward travel -

Day -3

Start Sleep/Light/Meal Shift

- Go to bed 30-60 min earlier.
- Get morning light exposure.
- Avoid screen use late at night
- Shift meals 30-45 mins earlier.
- Keep caffeine to first half of day.
- Confirm flight and arrival times.
- Start planning snacks and hydration

Continue Adjustments

- Go to bed another 60 min earlier.
- Get morning light exposure.
- Avoid screen use late at night
- Shift meals a little earlier again.
- Keep caffeine to first half of day.
- Avoid heavy evening meals
- Start planning sleep aids for flight

Day -2

Advance Meal Timing

- Keep to earlier bedtime close to destination times.
- Avoid afternoon naps
- Have normal balanced meal in early evening
- Keep caffeine to first half of day.
- Avoid alcohol
- Pack using checklist
- Plan sleep window for flight
- Online check-in

Day -1

Step by step guide (continued) -

In-Flight Strategies

- Ensure you've filled your water bottle before boarding.
- Set watch/phone to destination time when board.
- If arrival in the morning try to sleep during the flight.
- If arrival is in the evening try to stay awake throughout flight
- Eat light meals in line with destination times.

Flight

Arrival

Arrival day adaptation

- Get bright light in destination morning, sunlight if possible.
- Avoid naps.
- Go to bed at normal destination time.
- Eat to normal meal frequency but at destination time, even if not hungry.
- Morning caffeine could be beneficial, avoid in afternoon.
- Keep hydrated throughout the day.
- Undertake light exercise, ideally in the destination morning.
- Consider 1-3g of melatonin in evening.



Frequently Asked Questions

1 Is it safe to eat fresh fruit and salads whilst abroad?

This depends on the country you travel to but in higher risk countries it's best to avoid fruit that can't be peeled, and salads.

2 What about drinking water at destination?

Again this depends on the country but to be safe stick with bottled water and avoid ice in your drinks.

3 Can I try the local cuisines?

This is a key part of the experience of travelling to different countries, but best to avoid street food, or food that may have been kept warm for indeterminate amounts of time. Also it takes time for our bodies to adapt to different foods, and eating at different times, so consider anything novel after your competition.

4 Can I take my medications and supplements through customs

Check your government's official advice online. Many countries require you to provide copies of your prescriptions to clear customs.

UK citizen advise - <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

Summary

- Planning ahead is key to avoiding issues an athlete may face during travel.
- Create and use a checklist for preparation and packing.
- Acclimatize as soon as possible with local times.
- Prioritise sleep hygiene routines, and hydration.
- Take precautions for increased risk of catching infections.

And of course.....
don't forget your toothbrush!

