

Sports women and nutritional aspects

■ ARJUN SINGH AND RAMESH KUMAR YADAV

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■ ABSTRACT

The study was undertaken to find the effect of nutritional aspects taken by a sports woman. A sports woman with inadequate dietary intake of calcium and iron may require nutritional supplements, besides improving her dietary intakes. A sports woman with very low energy intake may require a low dose of vitamin and mineral supplement to meet the nutritional needs. If a sports woman is displaying signs of eating disorders, it is important to encourage her to seek professional help. She should also be encouraged to drink plenty of fluids. It is advisable not to wait until she starts feeling thirsty, because thirst means that she is already dehydrated. Fluid intake should be even more in hot and humid weather.

■ **Key Words** : Balance Diet, Weight control, Eating disorders

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See end of the article for authors' affiliations

Correspondence to :

ARJUN SINGH

Department of Physical Education,
Dr. R.M.L. Avadh University,
FAIZABAD (U.P.) INDIA

Feminism is about freedom, the individual and collective liberty to make decisions, sports have freed women and continue to free women from restrictive dress, behaviours, laws and customs and from the belief that women cant or should not achieve or compete or win”(Nelson)

If we look into the history of women in sports, we have to go back to 776BC when the first Olympics was held in ancient Greece and women were totally excluded from it. In 396 BC, Kyniska, a Spartion princess won an Olympic race, but was barred from collecting her prize in person. But since 1722 when the first British fighter Elizabeth Wilkinson entered the boxing ring the women have not looked back. In 1805 the first ice skating race for Dutch women was held in Leeuwarden. Similarly in 1811 the first known women's gold tournament was held in Musselburgh Golf club Scotland. In 1884 women's singles tennis competition was added to Wimbledon.

Stay strong , play on” is the theme of NGWSD(National Association for Girls and Women in Sport Day) for the year 2010. Women involved in regular sports have some special nutritional needs in order to stay healthy as well as to perform well (Khanna and Prakash, 1990; Greednberg and Poram, 1986). Though the basic principles of sports nutrition are similar for men and women, females involved in regular sporting activity

do have increased needs for certain nutrients and may be more at risk of dietary deficiencies. The key nutritional issues for sports women include:

– Balanced diet, calcium intake, iron intake, weight control and eating disorders.

Balanced diet :

Calories :

Adequate calories intake is crucial for performance. The number of calories needed is determined by the number of calories burnt each day. There are two primary components that determine total energy expenditure (TEE). The first is resting energy expenditure (REE). REE is the amount of calories needed to maintain basic body functions while at rest such as for body temperature regulation. The second component is activity energy expenditure (AEE). AEE is the number of calories needed to fuel physical activity.

Carbohydrate :

Carbohydrate is a key when it comes to peak performance. During exercise, carbohydrate is the primary fuel source for both the muscle and the brain. The carbohydrates are broken by the body into simple sugar glucose which is