

California Raisins UK

Consumer Press Release



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CALIFORNIA RAISINS: HELPING ENGLAND'S RUGBY PLAYERS HIT PEAK PERFORMANCE

By Rick Miller, Clinical and Sports Dietitian, Harley Street, London

You might be surprised to learn that such a small natural snack works wonders for the energy levels of professional sportsmen, but rugby players seeking optimum energy levels – including the England team – are reaching for raisins before and during matches with fantastic results. Whether players are 'minimisers' (dropping body fat), 'maintainers' (maintaining performance) or 'maximisers' (building muscle mass), a steady source of natural carbohydrates are essential for peak performance. The England rugby team snack on raisins before and during a match to ensure they're properly fuelled for the whole 90-minute performance:

CLASSIFICATION	GI RANGE	EXAMPLES
Low GI	55 or less	Beans, small seeds, most grains, most vegetables, most fruits, porridge, wholemeal bread, sweet potato.
Medium GI	55-70	Pitta bread, basmati rice, raisins, honey, fruit juice.
High GI	70 and above	White rice, white pasta, corn flakes, most breakfast cereals, potatoes, white bread and bagels

(Source: <http://foodforrugby.org/foundations-of-food>)

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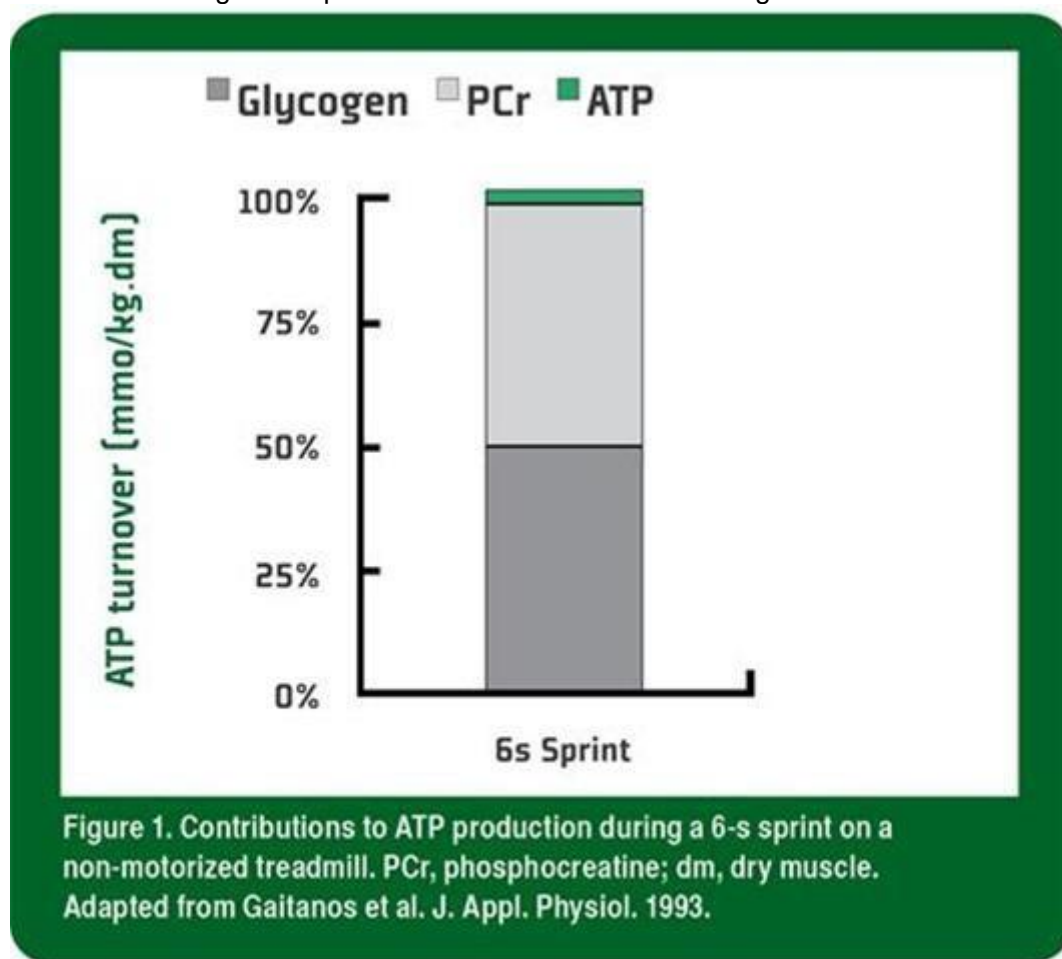
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Why are raisins the perfect snack for rugby players?

Rugby is a stop-start sport with players engaging in high-intensity exercise – sprinting and tackling – punctuated by periods of low-intensity jogging and walking. This specific pattern of play puts a strain on the body's natural glycogen (carbohydrate) levels.

A six-second sprint uses 50 per cent of the body's stored glycogen, and by the end of a 80-minute match, glycogen stores are reduced by 60 per cent. Players on lower carbohydrate diets also covered an average of 30 per cent less distance in total during a match.



Glycemic index is a measure of the impact of carbohydrate foods on blood glucose levels – the higher the count, the faster that particular food makes blood glucose levels rise.

It's recommended that players consume 30-60g of low glycemic index carbohydrates every three to four hours during training.

When match day or heavy training approaches, switching to moderate and high glycemic index carbohydrates (such as California Raisins with a medium GI) is key to maintaining blood glucose levels – they absorb faster and help improve energy levels.

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Two servings of 30 grams of California Raisins provides 44g of carbohydrate, so consuming **30g just before play** and **30g at half-time** will give optimum results.

What are the other benefits of switching to raisins for fuel during rugby matches?

Recent research also suggests that moderate glycemic carbohydrates such as California Raisins may be superior to high glycemic carbohydrates in preventing 'rebound hypoglycemia'. This causes dizziness and nausea, which can affect athletes who've consumed high glycemic index carbohydrates (such as sports drinks) close to match play.

So, if you're looking for peak performance on the pitch, put down those sports drinks and reach for a handful of California Raisins before and during a match – that's one conversion you'll be sure to hit right!

About the Author:

Rick Miller is a registered Clinical and Sports Dietitian based in Harley Street, London.

You can find out more about Rick at www.rick-miller.co.uk

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