

Muscle Recovery Drinks

Thanks to one important ingredient, your thirst-quenching sports drink can become your post-workout pain eraser. By Leah Fielding and Valerie Gleaton

Sore muscles might seem unavoidable after a hard-charging day on the slopes. And while a few après cocktails and a soak in the hot tub are timeless remedies, muscle pain after skiing isn't inevitable. With ingredients that rebuild and repair the damaged muscle tissue that causes pain, a new category of sports drinks has emerged to speed recovery time. Like energy drinks, recovery recipes include carbohydrates and electrolytes, but they also contain protein, a key ingredient for muscle repair. There's still no consensus on the best source of protein—whey, soy or milk—and the optimal carb-to-protein ratio, but most nutritionists agree that it's between 3:1 and 6:1, and that the drinks should be consumed within 30 minutes after exercise.

					
	FLUID RESTORE	GATORADE PROTEIN RECOVERY	LOWFAT CHOCOLATE MILK	CHERRYPHARM NATURAL RECOVERY	MIX1LIFE ENHANCED PROTEIN
WHAT IT IS	Fluid contains 2,500 mg of L-glutamine—an anti-inflammatory amino acid critical to muscle stamina and recovery. It also has electrolytes and vitamin C to keep you hydrated and support your immune system, which is easily weakened by cold weather and intense exercise.	Gatorade's recovery products come in shake or powder form, and both kick-start the amino acid and glycogen synthesis that repairs tissue damage. Skiing several days in a row? Mix the powder packet with a 20-ounce bottle of Gatorade Thirst Quencher to get twice the carb content of the shake.	Two recent studies found that chocolate milk provides post-workout benefits that are equal or superior to other recovery drinks. Plus, like your mother always told you: Calcium makes your bones strong.	Every 8-ounce bottle has the equivalent of 50 whole tart cherries that contain potent levels of phyto-nutrients and antioxidants, which work as anti-inflammatories. Research also shows that tart cherries can help you get your Zs, always important for recovery.	Mix1 has high levels of antioxidants and approximately three servings of fruits and vegetables per serving. Soluble fiber also allows for sustained digestion and decreased hunger, which means more skiing and less stopping to snack.
PROTEIN SOURCE	whey	milk protein isolate	milk	whey	whey
CARB-TO-PROTEIN RATIO	3.5:1	2:1 (shake), 3:1 (powder)	3.5:1	4:1	2:1
NUTRITION	250 mg of sodium; 25 grams of carbohydrates; 7 grams of protein; 128 calories per serving	70 mg of sodium; 28 grams of carbohydrates; 10 grams of protein; 150 calories per serving	240 mg of sodium; 27 grams of carbohydrates; 8 grams of protein; 160 calories per serving	20 mg of sodium; 30 grams of carbohydrates; 8 grams of protein; 160 calories per serving	125 mg of sodium; 29 grams of carbohydrates; 15 grams of protein; 200 calories per serving
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