



THE BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION

The Professional Association for Registered Dietitians
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Media Release

29 August 2008

BREAKFAST AND BERRIES – THE SECRET TO BEIJING SUCCESS

The importance of breakfast and berries have been amply proven by Britain's Olympic heroes and now their secrets of achieving world-beating performances and boosting recovery can help everyone get that extra bounce back in their lives.

A good breakfast is key: many of the top Olympians, including medal-winning sailors, like Paul Goodison and Sarah Ayton, regularly ate porridge for breakfast as part of their pre-Olympic campaign. Ann Ashworth, registered sports dietitian and British Dietetic Association member, says: "Porridge oats are high in energy-giving carbohydrates, which are slowly absorbed and help stave off hunger pangs. For example, we know that Paul, Olympic gold medallist in the men's Laser class, ate porridge to help him lose weight to make the most of the predominantly light winds forecast for the sailing venue in China."

Porridge oats are not only good for people watching their weight - evidence suggests that the soluble fibre in oats is good for heart health too. And it's not only porridge that can help us to ring the changes!

According to Karen Reid, a registered sports dietitian, many cyclists and athletes exploited some of the most powerful dietary antioxidants naturally present in fruits and vegetables as part of their nutritional preparation for Beijing. The powerhouse food compound is a group of naturally-occurring flavonoids called anthocyanins, which are typically found in blueberries, blackcurrants, raspberries, cherries, blackberries, and beetroot. These are responsible for the deep pigments of red, purple and blue found in a range of fruits and vegetables.

Karen adds: "Athletes I've worked with swear by the benefits of including berries as part of their nutritional recovery, along with fluids, electrolytes, proteins and carbs.

"Anthocyanins can help with recovery from the stress of exercise during training and competition, and counter the effects of pollution on the body. Athletes want to do everything they can to avoid getting run down and picking up infections leading up to a major competition like the Games. Research

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evidence also suggests that anthocyanins have anti-inflammatory properties and benefits for immune systems stressed by heavy training loads”.

As well as serving Olympians well, anthocyanins may even have anti-ageing properties and a whole host of health-boosting benefits. Latest findings show potentially protective effects against heart disease, strokes, cancer, MRSA and Alzheimer’s disease, amongst other conditions.

Karen’s top tip for getting some of the Beijing bounce is to pick blackberries which grow in abundance across Britain. Or make the use of both berries and porridge for a double helping of nutritional boost by making Swiss style Bircher muesli¹.

Media enquiries to The British Dietetic Association and requests for interviews with sports dietitians Ann Ashworth and Karen Reid should be directed to our media hotline on 0870 850 2517 or pr@bda.uk.com.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1. Bircher muesli recipe: Soak 50g oats with 100ml of orange or apple juice overnight. Grate in half an apple and mix with a 2 heaped tablespoons of yogurt (natural or fruit). Top with fresh blackberries, blueberries or strawberries for that extra antioxidant boost.
2. The British Dietetic Association, founded in 1936, is the professional association for registered dietitians in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It is the nation’s largest organisation of food and nutrition professionals with nearly 6,000 members. About two-thirds of members are employed in the National Health Service. The remaining members work in education, industry, research, sport settings or freelance.
3. Registered dietitians hold the only legally-recognisable graduate qualification in nutrition and dietetics. They are experts in interpreting and translating the science of nutrition into practical ways of promoting nutritional well-being, disease treatment and the prevention of nutrition-related problems. Their advice is sound and based on current scientific evidence. Registration, awarded by the Health Professionals Council, is an indication that a dietitian is fit to practise and is working within an agreed statement of conduct. For further details about the British Dietetic Association, please visit our website: www.bda.uk.com.