

POTATOES AND ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE FACT CHECK



Q: Are potatoes beneficial in the diet of an athlete?

A: Yes. One medium (5.2 ounce) skin-on potato provides 26 grams of carbohydrate, 620 milligrams of potassium, and 110 calories for energy - key nutrients in the diets of athletes and active individuals.

FACTS

- Potatoes are nutrient-dense complex carbs. A medium (5.2 ounce) skin-on potato contains 26 grams of carbohydrates.¹
 - Carbohydrate is the primary fuel for your brain and a key source of energy for muscles.
 - Carbohydrate is important for optimal physical and mental performance.²
 - Because your body's own stores of carbohydrate are limited and may be depleted – even in a single session of intense and/or prolonged exercise – it's important to replenish them.²
- Potatoes have even more potassium than a medium-size banana.³ A medium (5.2 ounce) skin-on potato contains 620 milligrams of potassium.
 - Potassium is an important electrolyte that aids in muscle, cardiovascular and nervous system function.
 - The 2015 Dietary Guidelines mention potassium as an under-consumed nutrient of concern, and recommends consuming foods with the highest level of potassium such as white potatoes.⁴
- Potatoes are more energy-packed than any other popular vegetable.³ A medium (5.2 ounce) skin-on potato contains 110 calories.
 - Adequate energy intake supports optimal body functions.
 - It's critical to take in the appropriate number of calories to match the demands of your day.

REFERENCES

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3. US Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, Nutrient Data Laboratory. USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, Release 28 (Slightly revised). Version Current: May 2016.
4. Internet: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/ba/bhnrc/ndl>
5. Potassium: Food Sources Ranked by Amounts of Potassium and Energy per Standard Food Portions and per 100 Grams of Foods. Available at: <http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/appendix-10/>.