

▶▶ We all know that eating healthily will make us feel better but when you are racing to catch a tee time it is a test of willpower. Any gym or sports centre will offer a multitude of sports drinks and high protein bars but a typical golf clubhouse will offer chocolate, crisps and bacon sandwiches. Food which provides a quick fix and tastes great when you're famished, but leaves you feeling lethargic by the 12th hole.

Golf is viewed by many as simply a long walk hitting a small white ball along the way. But golf is a game which demands physical stamina, mental stress and endurance over a sustained period of time. Leading Sports Nutritionist and Managing Director of Corpotential Limited, Kathryn Bistany says, "golfers are the forgotten athletes. Good nutrition should not be the preserve of aerobic sports. Keeping the mind fit, alert and positive is vital for a sportsman whose game essentially lasts for four days. To retain concentration at this level requires high levels of physical and mental fitness – I firmly believe that nutrition offers the key to success."

FLUIDS FOR FOCUSING

Performance is presumed to be exclusively linked to physical training and natural ability, whereas every single physical function is reliant on nutritional support. At a professional level more golfers are taking interest in their nutrition, but at amateur level good nutrition is equally important for both the physical and mental sides of the game, as well as your long term health.

Mental concentration is one of the most underestimated aspects of the game, and the first organ to be affected by poor nutrition is the brain. Mental focus is related to blood



Free your body of toxins and play better

The forgotten athletes

Make it your New Year's resolution to not only watch what you eat, but make sure you're taking on board quality food and you'll feel better both mentally and physically on the course, writes **Alicia Harney**

sugar balance and hydration. Make sure you take on board enough fluids during a round by drinking water on every tee box. Foods which are high on the glycaemic index such as potatoes and bread will give you a quick burst of blood sugar but then lead to an inability to concentrate. Golfers need slow to medium burning energy found

in proteins and the good fats. Mixing a high glycaemic food with a low glycaemic one should give a moderate release of energy.

Take a tip from the professionals and pack snacks in your golf bag. Bananas with nuts (which contain protein and fats) are good, or sandwiches, not the mayonnaise loaded triple

decker brought from the petrol station on the way to the course, but something like turkey (protein) in wholemeal bread will provide slow burning fuel.

Controlling what you eat will help you avoid any processed food on offer in the clubhouse which will place stress on the gut, which is sensitive to junk food and sugar, preventing it from absorbing nutrients. Food preservatives will also place a strain on the body and it will waste energy processing them.

THE GOOD FATS

Following a fat free diet isn't advisable as the body needs some fat for certain biochemical functions. Depriving your body of fat will only make you irritable and craving for a sausage sandwich at the half way house. But there are good fats and bad fats. Avoid anything man-made which has been transformed from a high fat to a low fat. These 'trans fats' will harden the arteries. Polyunsaturated fats are good fats which are found in oily fish like salmon and mackerel. The monounsaturated olive oil, if cold-pressed and extra-virgin, is also extremely beneficial.

It's also important to remember that our bodies change on a yearly basis, and decade to decade. Indulging in a full English breakfast before 18 holes at 40 isn't always as easy to digest as it was at 30. If you feel constipated, bloated, constantly tired or suffering from regular headaches your body may not be digesting or absorbing enough nutrients. Corpotential can provide a full consultation, taking blood, urine and stool tests to find out what is going on inside.

Consultations with Corpotential cost £250. The initial consultation typically lasts for up to three hours. For more details call 020 8994 3701 or visit www.corpotential.com. 