

Meals eaten by the Japanese athletes during the Games of the XXVI Olympiad

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This is a report on what and how the members of the Japanese delegation ate in order to maintain their condition during the Olympic Games in Atlanta and to achieve peak condition on the days of competition. The Japanese delegation used mainly the large dining room that was ten minutes by foot from their lodgings and the auxiliary dining room, also only minutes away by foot.

Both dining rooms were open 24 hours a day. In the large dining room, full-course menus were provided as well as fruit, a salad bar, cheese, beverages, desserts and McDonald's products. In the auxiliary dining room, conventional McDonald's menus were provided, as well as other food including fruit, a salad bar, yoghurt, cereal and ice-cream. In these dining rooms, meals were served buffet-style. The members of the delegations had to decide on their own what and how much food to eat. Meals are served basically as buffets not only at the Olympic Games but also at Asian meets and other international competitions. Athletes must therefore have some knowledge of nutrition, even if it is not perfect. In this regard, many athletes receive lectures on nutrition at their training camps. Since they also eat buffet meals when participating in international competitions, I think they had no particular problems in Atlanta.

As the Japanese delegation doctor, I made some model menus (see below) after consulting with dieticians on how the athletes should eat. Then I indicated the key components in the model menus. First, athletes should eat well-balanced meals consisting of a staple food (rice, bread, noodles, pasta or cereal), a main dish (meat, fish, eggs, ham, etc.), a vegetable dish, milk and fruit. Food should be consumed in moderation; eating too much is to be avoided. Athletes must cut down on fatty foods and eat more grilled, roasted, boiled or steamed foods. Easily digestible food should be chosen. A

sufficient quantity of green or yellow vegetables should be eaten, as well as a healthy amount of fruit. Low-fat milk should be drunk at every meal. For menus immediately preceding an event (see below), I suggested that the athletes should be moderate, not eating too much. They should choose easily digestible food (minimize oily foods) and eat mainly grain-based products such as rice, bread, spaghetti, corn flakes and a lot of fruit. Regarding beverages, a lot of 100% pure fruit juice was recommended.

The kinds and volume of meals provided in the large dining room were very appropriate, but the taste must have seemed bland to the Japanese. The limited life within the Olympic Village was monotonous. For a change, athletes sometimes went out into the city to have Japanese meals, which helped to maintain their condition. We installed a digital scale in the medical treatment room that was accurate to the nearest 50g so that the athletes could weigh themselves at any time.

No athlete reported to the medical treatment room complaining of trouble due to meals during this Olympic Games, which was held in very hot summer weather. I was very pleased. The constant efforts of the Atlanta Olympic Games Committee were responsible for these good results.

In conclusion, I express my sincere thanks to the members of the Atlanta Olympic Games Committee.

CHOOSING FROM THE BUFFET AT THE OLYMPIC VILLAGE

What to select:

1. Staple food
2. Main dish: meat, fish, eggs, ham, etc.
3. Vegetable
4. Milk
5. Fruit



THE DINING ROOM AT THE OLYMPIC VILLAGE IN ATLANTA

Tips:

- Eat well-balanced meals following the model menu with foods from groups 1 to 5.
- Be moderate. Do not eat too much.
- Cut down on fatty foods. Choose foods that are grilled, roasted, boiled or steamed.
- Choose easily digestible food.
- Eat a sufficient amount of green and yellow vegetables.
- Eat enough fruit.
- Drink low-fat milk at every meal.
- Chew the food thoroughly and eat slowly.
- Do not eat any food just before going to bed.
- Do not try any new food until you have finished your events.
- Do not eat too much oily food.
- Eat a sufficient amount of grain-based foods such as rice, bread, spaghetti and corn flakes.
- Drink plenty of 100% pure fruit juice.
- Take food supplements such as calcium tablets, iron tablets and vitamin C tabs.