

The Road to Muscle Recovery

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Mandy trained with Saint Louis Ballet School from the age of 3 until she graduated high school and became a company member with Saint Louis Ballet for the 2005-06 season. In 2009, she graduated Magna Cum Laude from Saint Louis University with her Bachelor of Science Degree in nutrition and dietetics with a minor in psychology and completed her dietetic internship at The Christ Hospital in Cincinnati, OH. She is a Registered and Licensed Dietitian Nutritionist and has worked with a variety of populations in weight loss, wellness, sports nutrition and child nutrition. She currently lives in Cincinnati, OH with her husband, Sean and their daughter, Sydney. Mandy visits her family in Saint Louis often and loves to catch a SLB performance when she is in town.

Many athletes, including dancers, focus on what they eat before training and often forget about what they eat

afterwards. Recovering properly helps to heal your muscles so you continue to get stronger after each class. You may have heard body builders, football players, or other athletes talk about eating tons of protein on top of drinking protein shakes to build and repair their muscles. While ballet dancers aren't bodybuilders, it is still imperative to repair your muscles after a tough class with a combination of protein and complex carbohydrates. Helping your muscles recover is essential to improving your performance in the studio. Make sure to eat your recovery meal or snack within 30-60 minutes of class. Your muscles are the most receptive to nutrition at this time. Here are some simple recovery snack ideas:

- 6 oz Nonfat Greek yogurt or cottage cheese with berries
- 1 cup low fat chocolate milk
- Banana with 1 TBSP almond or peanut butter
- Half of a deli turkey and cheese sandwich on 100% whole wheat bread
- ¼ cup hummus w/ 1 toasted whole wheat pita (I like to sprinkle mine with garlic powder for extra flavor!)

- **Homemade Muscle Recovery Granola** (see recipe below): You can eat this by itself or sprinkle it on a cup of yogurt. This high energy granola is calorie dense so be sure to watch portion size!

It is important to note that if your class ends right before meal time, then you don't need an additional recovery snack before eating that meal. Make sure that your meal is balanced with complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains, lean protein, such as fish or chicken and vegetables, such as broccoli.

In addition to eating properly after class, it is also essential to replenish lost fluids, especially as summer approaches. Fluid needs can vary greatly from person to person depending on how much you sweat, body size and the intensity of the class or rehearsal. The best way to determine if you are consuming enough fluids is to monitor your output. The darker your urine, the more concentrated with metabolic waste it is and the more fluid you need to consume. Additionally, if you feel lethargic and headachy all the time, you could be dehydrated. Try to not only consume additional fluid water throughout the day, but also consume foods that are high in water content such as watermelon and cucumbers. I personally don't like to recommend

sports drinks, such as Gatorade or Powerade, due to the artificial colors and other ingredients in these drinks.

Overall, nutrition can truly make or break your performance. Always be sure to fuel up before class, drink plenty of fluids throughout the day, and recover properly with a balanced meal or snack afterwards and you will definitely see a difference in how your body feels!

Homemade Muscle Recovery Granola **Recipe**

Yield: 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups

Serving Size: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

Ingredients

2 cups regular oats
 1/3 cup ground flaxseed
 1/4 cup chopped walnuts
 1/4 cup chopped slivered almonds
 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
 1/3 cup orange juice
 1/3 cup honey
 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
 2 teaspoons canola oil
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 Cooking spray
 1/3 cup dried cranberries

Preparation

Preheat oven to 300°.

Combine first 5 ingredients in a medium bowl.

Combine orange juice, honey, and brown sugar in a small saucepan. Cook over medium heat just until sugar dissolves, stirring frequently. Remove from heat; stir in oil and vanilla.

Pour honey mixture over oat mixture, stirring to coat. Spread mixture in a thin layer onto a jelly-roll pan coated with cooking spray. Bake at 300° for 10 minutes; stir well. Bake an additional 10 to 15 minutes or until golden brown. Spoon granola into a bowl; stir in dried cranberries. Cool completely.

Note: Store completely cooled granola in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 weeks.

Nutritional Information

Calories 196
Calories from fat 31 %
Fat 6.8 g
Sat fat 0.7 g
Mono fat 2.2 g
Poly fat 3.3 g
Protein 4.1 g
Carbohydrate 32.5 g
Fiber 3.6 g
Cholesterol 0.0 mg
Iron 1.5 mg
Sodium 5 mg
Calcium 38 mg

*Recipe and nutrition analysis courtesy of www.myrecipes.com