

# News For

# SWIM PARENTS

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## "Quick Energy"

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**QUESTION:** Many young swimmers eat powdered Jello at swim meets. Will this give an athlete "quick energy" for the meet and improve performance? Are there any true sources of quick energy that can be taken just before a meet?

**ANSWER:** No, ingesting powdered sugar (ie Jello) immediately before a swim meet will not supply the body with a quick source of energy and will not improve performance. In fact, it may reduce performance. The best way for swimmers to nutritionally prepare for a meet, is to eat a meal or snack that is high in complex carbohydrate, 4 hours before the competition begins. This meal will help ensure that energy stores in the body, especially those in the liver and circulating blood, are adequate. Consuming too much simple sugar 15 to 30 minutes before a swim competition may cause blood sugar levels to be reduced, thus reducing performance.

There is no such thing as a quick energy source that can be taken immediately before a swim competition. Athletes and parents should be careful about using food sources or products that make this claim.