



## DAY 4 - NUTRITION FOR FIREFIGHTERS

### INTERNAL PPE FOR FIREFIGHTERS

#### WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT:

Firefighters wear PPE to protect against the environment we can see.

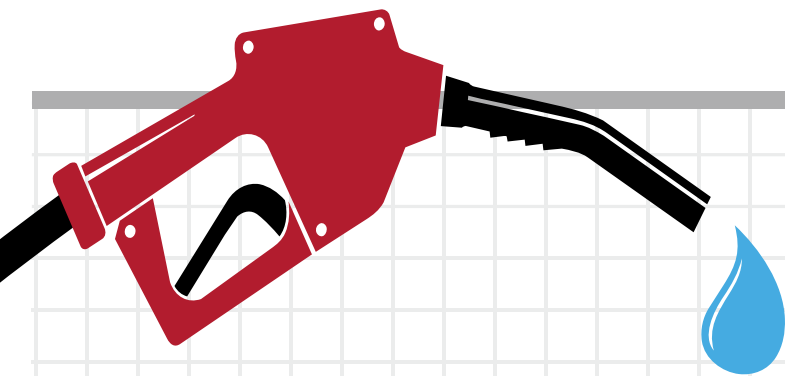
Nutrition is your INTERNAL PPE – protecting you from the hazards you can't.

Every call exposes you to:

- Carcinogens
- Cardiovascular strain
- Chronic inflammation

You can't completely eliminate exposure – but you can control how your body responds.

Nutrition plays a big part in that.



### FUEL FOR THE CALL

Firefighters are tactical athletes.

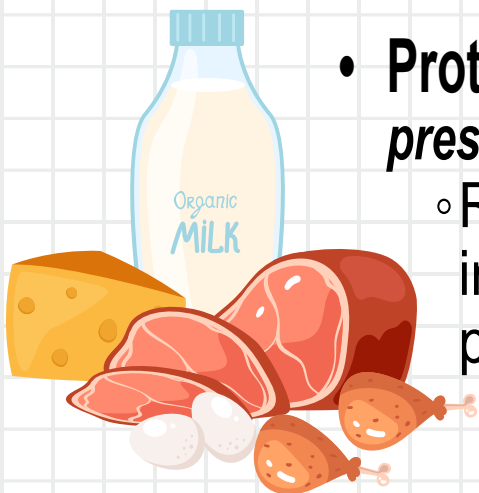
#### Key Points:

- **Carbohydrates = primary fuel source**
  - Supports high-intensity work, decision-making, & endurance

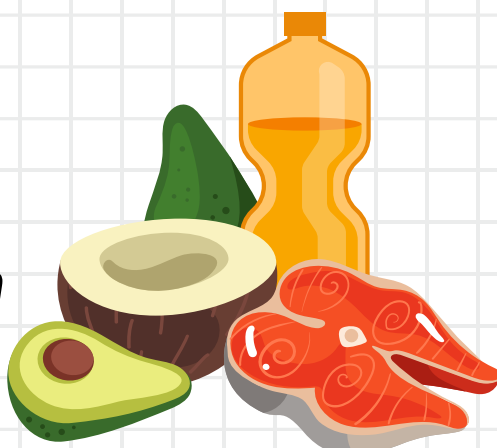


- **Protein = recovery + muscle preservation**

- Reduces injury risk & improves repeat performance



- **Fats = sustained energy + hormone health**



#### Operational Reality:

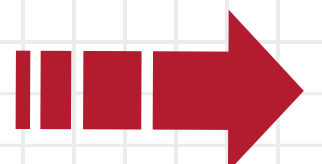
- Long shifts + unpredictable calls = inconsistent fueling

#### Under-fueling leads to:

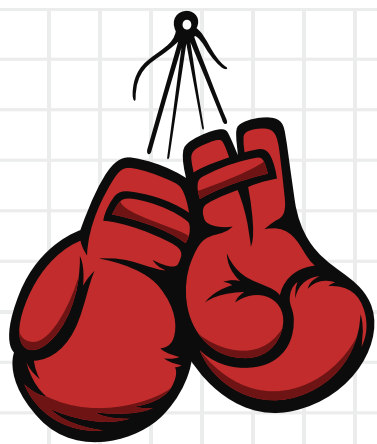
- Early fatigue
- Poor cognition
- Decreased performance

#### Simple Actions:

- Eat before you're starving
- Include protein in every meal
- Keep grab-and-go fuel available (applesauce pouches, bars, fruit, yogurt shakes)



**FUEL. PROTECT. LAST.**



## FIGHT WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE

Firefighters have increased risk of:

- Cancer
- Cardiovascular disease

### Cardiac Protection:

- Cardiac events remain a leading cause of line-of-duty death

### Nutrition Targets:

- Increase whole foods
- Prioritize healthy fats (olive oil, nuts, fish)
- Reduce high-sodium, fried, and processed foods



### Cancer Prevention:

- Repeated exposure → oxidative stress + DNA damage
- Nutrition helps:
  - Reduce inflammation
  - Support detox pathways
  - Protect cells from damage

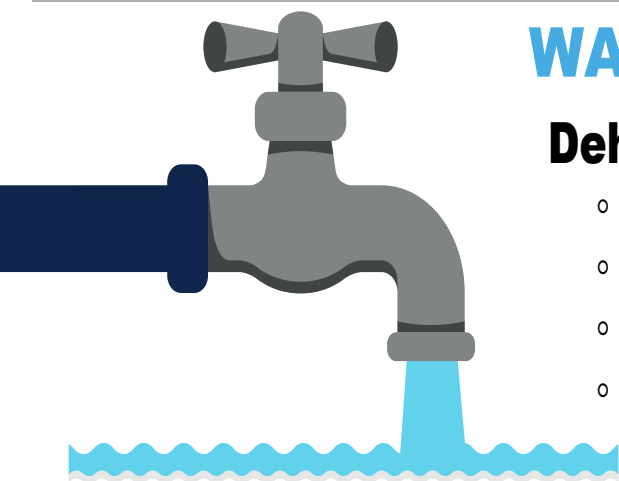
### Key Habits:

- 5+ servings of fruits/vegetables daily
- Increase fiber (beans, whole grains)



- Limit:
  - Processed meats
  - Excess alcohol
  - Ultra-processed foods

**Like cleaning your gear after a fire – nutrition cleans you inside.**



## WATER — Your simplest performance enhancer

### Dehydration impacts:

- Performance
- Cognitive function
- Cardiac strain
- Recovery

### Hydration Rules:

- Start shift hydrated
- Drink consistently
- Use electrolytes on high-exertion days

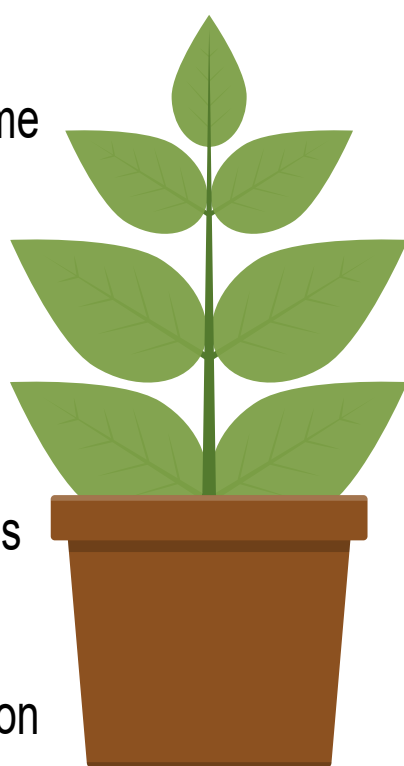
## BUILD A CAREER THAT LASTS

### The Reality:

- Chronic inflammation builds over time
- Poor nutrition accelerates:
  - Joint breakdown
  - Metabolic disease
  - Cancer and cardiac risk

### What Supports Longevity:

- Consistent, balanced eating patterns
- Anti-inflammatory foods:
  - Fruits, vegetables, omega-3 fats
- Maintaining healthy body composition



### Think Long-Term:

- Early career = build the engine
- Mid-career = maintain performance
- Late career = protect longevity

**This job isn't just getting through a shift – it's finishing your career healthy.**

### Simple Actions:

- Add color to every plate
- Prioritize recovery meals after calls
- Focus on consistency over perfection

## BOTTOM LINE:

**Nutrition fuels performance, protects your heart, reduces cancer risk, and supports long-term health.**

