

# Sports Nutritionals Market in the U.S.: Sports Drinks and Nutrition Bars

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## Abstracts

Driven by 77 million users of sports drinks and powered by 28 million consumers of nutrition bars, the sports nutritional market has experienced encouraging growth in recent years. This new Packaged Facts report identifies trends influencing the sports nutritional market, highlights key market opportunities and drills down into the factors affecting the growth of the retail sales of nutrition bars and sports drinks through 2017. It also analyzes the competitive positions of key players in the market and highlights marketing and new product trends.

The report uncovers a number of developments creating both challenges and opportunities for marketers. For example, the report pinpoints the vast demographic and attitudinal differences between those who are high-volume users of sports drinks and those who eat relatively large quantities of nutrition bars. Women dominate the market for nutrition bars. Only 45% of those eating at least one nutrition bar in the last 30 days are men, while 55% are women. Female consumers of nutrition bars outnumber their male counterparts 15.2 million to 12.4 million and offer a major opportunity for nutrition bars as well as other sports nutritionals geared especially for women.

In sharp contrast, men account for 64% of high-volume users of sports drink, and young men are most likely to use sports drinks. Yet, marketers need to face the fact that the population of males under the age of 25, their most prized marketing target, will decline over the next decade as the aging of America begins to accelerate.

The report also shows how consumers pursuing individual sports and fitness activities, rather than team sport players, are the key to success in the retail sports nutritional market. When it comes to targeting consumers of large quantities of sports nutritional products, 6.3 million fitness walkers comprise the single largest and most attractive

market segment. Those taking yoga classes (1.3 million) as well as those pursuing outdoor activities such as mountain biking (1.5 million) and camping and backpacking (1.2 million each) are more numerous than soccer, football, softball, baseball or volleyball players.

## **Market Definition**

The market for sports nutritionals includes sports drinks and nutrition bars as well as product categories such as protein and weight gain powders, and pre- and post-workout supplements and energy gels. This Packaged Facts report focuses on the market for sports drinks and nutrition bars.

The report defines the market for sports drinks and nutrition bars on the basis of product segments provided by SymphonyIRI InfoScan Reviews, which tracks sales through U.S. supermarkets and grocery stores, drugstores, and mass merchandisers (including Target and Kmart but excluding Walmart) with annual sales of \$2 million or more.

The nutrition bar category includes bars that may also be referred to as energy bars, diet bars and sports bars. SymphonyIRI tracks nutrition bars in the category called “nutritional/intrinsic health value” bars.

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## About

Traditionally, sports drinks were divided into three major categories:

**Hypotonic:** which contain relatively low concentrations of electrolytes (salts) and sugars.

**Isotonic:** which contain mid-level concentrations of electrolytes (salts) and sugars.

**Hypertonic:** which contain high concentrations of electrolytes (salts) and sugars.

These different levels of sugar and salts theoretically serve different restorative needs. The principal benefit ascribed to sports drinks, however, stayed constant. Their main purpose was to enable athletes to restore fluids lost as a result of strenuous exercise.

Now, however, as a result of the rapid evolution—if not revolution—of the sports drink market, both consumers and, perhaps even marketers, may appropriately wonder “what makes a sports drink a sports drink?” Sports drinks now are geared more broadly at the nutritional needs of athletes and physically active consumers before, during and after demanding exercise and they are formulated with ingredients that range far and wide beyond salts and sugars.

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