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A Nutrition Guide for Athletes, Parents, and Coaches

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Recipe of the Week
[Beef & Veggie Grilled Kabobs](#)

Color, taste and texture make for a wonderful presentation on your serving platter.

- **Focus** on a rainbow of real food, and you'll have the best shot at performing your best.
- **Fuel up on carbohydrates:** Carbohydrate-rich foods, as they come from nature, provide the best fuel for your working, growing, and active body.
 - What are they? Fruits, vegetables, whole grain breads, whole grain foods (such as brown rice), skim milk, legumes (split pea soup, lentil soup, black bean tortilla).
- **Get the right amount of protein:** Eating enough, but not excessive amounts, of protein throughout the day helps you perform **academically** as well as athletically. Protein also helps you repair tissues and maintain a strong immune system.
 - However, avoid the lure of high protein diets. They will not help you perform better. In fact, they may cut your energy substantially. This is because carbohydrates are the body's "highest octane" source of fuel. Also, a high protein diet can dehydrate you.
- **Don't forget the fat:** Healthy amounts and types of fat are necessary for your good health.
 - Healthy fats include: Peanuts and peanut butter, olive oil, canola oil, walnuts, almonds, pecans, Brazil nuts, soy nuts, and fat that is in fish.
- **What about dessert?** Yes!
 - Choose your favorite indulgence once or twice per week
 - For other desserts, have an extra serving of fruit with frozen yogurt

Game- and Practice-Day Nutrition Guidelines: Breakfast

Goals:

- Eat the same, healthy breakfast you eat every day. Not a breakfast eater? Now is the time to start!
- Start hydrating early in the day, with a large glass of milk and some water on the way to school.

Why?

- A variety of carbohydrate containing foods, calcium and protein replenishes your fuel stores, gives you a jump-start on your day and helps you think faster and better.
- Your fuel tank is empty after a night's sleep.

What? Three Game-Day - and Every day -- Breakfast Ideas:

Breakfast 1

- 2 pancakes or waffles with syrup
- 1 banana
- 1 to 2 cups skim milk

Breakfast 2

- 1 cup oatmeal with brown sugar or honey and raisins
- 1 to 2 cups skim milk

Breakfast 3

- 2-egg omelet
- 1 to 2 cups skim milk

- 2 slices whole wheat toast w/ margarine or peanut butter
- Fresh orange or pear

Game- and Practice-Day Nutrition Guidelines: Lunch

Goals:

- Let lunch be the last large meal before afternoon competition or practice that starts about 2 to 3 hours after lunch.
- Include a good source of carbohydrate, protein and fat.
- Hydrate with at least one large glass of water in addition to at least one carton of bone-building milk.

Why?

- Getting a variety of foods will help ensure getting the nutrients you need to think, work and play - and be healthy overall.

What? Three Game-Day - and Every day -- Lunch Ideas:

Lunch 1

- Turkey sandwich:
 - 2 slices whole wheat bread
 - 2 slices turkey breast
 - Mustard, tomato and lettuce
- 1-cup baby carrots with 2 tbsp. low-fat ranch dressing to dip
- 1 fresh orange
- 1 small bag pretzel twists
- 1 to 2 cups (cartons) skim milk
- 1 chocolate chip cookie

Lunch 2

- Peanut butter & jelly sandwich
 - 2 slices whole wheat bread
 - 2 tablespoons peanut butter
 - Jelly or jam
- 1 to 2 cups (cartons) skim milk
- Banana
- Frozen yogurt or ice cream
- Salad with dressing

Lunch 3

- Taco, with meat, lettuce, tomatoes and cheese
- 2 cartons skim milk
- Apple
- Salad with dressing

Game- and Practice-Day Nutrition Guidelines: Two-Hours Prior to Exercise

Goal

- Fuel and hydrate with low fat, high carbohydrate foods; a little bit of protein is okay

Why?

- Foods too high in fat and fiber may cause gastrointestinal upset during competition and result in

decreased performance.

- The body seeks the energy in carbs prior to a game/competition

What? Choose one or two of the following

- Canned or fresh fruit
- Fruit-filled cereal bar
- Packet of peanut butter and whole wheat crackers
- 100% fruit juice (try to choose calcium-fortified)
- Low-fat granola bar
- Animal crackers
- Banana
- Pretzel twists
- Graham crackers
- Skim milk or low-fat yogurt

Game- and Practice-Day Nutrition Guidelines: One-Hour Prior to Exercise

Goal:

- Fuel and hydrate without stressing the intestinal tract

Why?

- The body cannot digest solid food close to a work-out/game
- High-fructose corn syrup can cause intestinal cramping and diarrhea if consumed too close to or during the event or practice
- Staying hydrated during an event keeps you on top of your game

What?

- Do not eat solid foods one hour or less prior to competition.
- If you need fuel, fuel up on a sports beverage containing approximately 14-16 grams of carbohydrate per serving but that does not have high-fructose corn syrup
- Avoid carbonated, caffeinated and high-fructose corn syrup beverages like soda and certain sports drinks.
- Hydrate! Drink about 16 ounces of water one hour prior to competition.

Post-Exercise Nutrition Guidelines

Goals:

- Replenish energy stores
- Restore fluid losses

Why?

- The body absorbs glucose and replenishes lost glycogen stores best two hours after competition.

What?

- Best plan: Eat fruit, a bagel, toast, low-fat and fortified cereal bar, cereal with milk, or yogurt. Eat in small quantities and at a slow pace to avoid gastrointestinal upset.
- If you do not feel like eating, then drink a carbohydrate-rich beverage, such as skim milk, 100% fruit juice, or a carbohydrate- and electrolyte-containing sports drink
- Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate. Sip down at least 24 ounces after your practice or competition.

Post Game/Practice Dinner Guidelines

Goal:

- Eat to restore energy used today and to supply energy for tomorrow

Why?

- Fuel stores are best replenished within a few hours after working out/competing
- For young athletes who are growing, your body demands good nutrition
- For young athletes in school, your brain demands good nutrition to think better and faster

What?

- Focus on protein and carbohydrate-rich foods following competition and practice.
- Eat a food from each of the following groups at dinner:
 - Protein: Fish, chicken, beef, pork, tofu, tempeh, black beans, lentils, kidney beans, lamb. Try to rotate these protein sources throughout the week for maximum nutrition.
 - Calcium-rich dairy: At least 8 to 12 ounces of skim milk (white or chocolate) or yogurt at dinner; if you are lactose intolerant, try fortified low-fat soy milk.
 - Starch: At least a serving (1/2 to 1 cup) of different starches, such as:
 - Potatoes
 - Sweet Potatoes
 - Bulgur
 - Rice (try brown rice occasionally)
 - Barley
 - Pasta
- Fruits: At least one serving of a fruit
 - Try to rotate fruits throughout the week
- Vegetables: Have at least two different colors of vegetables at dinner. Nutrients and phytochemicals travel in colors, so mixing up colors helps you harvest all nutrients.

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