



# SPORTS NUTRITION

## Fueling Your Body for Sports and Exercise

HALL COUNTY SCHOOLS

2010-2011

### NUTRITION FOR

#### ATHLETES:

- Use food as fuel for activity
- Get enough energy, protein, and carbohydrate
- Time your meals and snacks with your schedules for practice and competition
- Replace electrolytes lost during exercise



### TIPS FOR STAYING HYDRATED:

- Drink 14 - 18 fluid ounces of water 1-2 hours before exercise (about the size of a regular water bottle)
- Pause during exercise every 15-20 minutes to take 2-3 large gulps of a sports drink
- Replenish fluid after exercise by drinking another bottle of water when body cools down

As a teen athlete, what you eat affects your health, growth, endurance, and risk for injury. Be sure you get the right foods to prevent injury to your muscles and stay healthy! Nutrition concerns for athletes include getting enough energy, staying hydrated, fueling properly before activity, and replacing what's lost during activity (electrolytes, fluid, carbohydrate, and protein).

Energy needs vary widely from person to person. What your needs are depends on

your level of activity, body size, and stage of physical development. Athletes spend more calories than most people. This means you need to eat more to grow properly.



Plan to eat regular meals and snacks and be prepared by keeping healthy snacks and a variety of foods around the house and with you before and after practice.

Timing of carbohydrate and protein rich foods is important for athletes. A high carbohydrate meal should be eaten prior to activity to provide energy to sustain your body during exercise. A meal with protein and sodium should be provided after activity to replace what was lost during exercise.

Like energy, protein needs also vary widely from person to person. Needs for protein increase after intense physical activity so that your body can repair and build muscles.

## Fluid and Electrolytes

Fluid needs are high for athletes because water and electrolytes are lost in sweat and urine during exercise. You should drink water before and after exercise, and drink sports drinks during activity.

Sports drinks help replace blood sugar and electrolytes during activity to keep you performing at your best and prevent injuries.

Drink more when practice is harder or longer, or if it is a hot day. An easy way to

tell if you're well hydrated is by the color of your urine - if it's light yellow you're well hydrated, but if it's darker you need to drink more.

See the box to the left for more hydration tips!



# The Pre-Event Meal

A pre-event meal is eaten at least an hour before a competition or before a practice — any time you engage in intense exercise for an extended period of time. The purpose of the meal is to fuel your activity and delay muscle fatigue (feeling tired). The pre-event meal should be rich in carbohydrate. This is because your body uses carbohydrate in your blood for energy during activity. If you eat a very high fat meal before exercise it could cause you to have stomach cramps or get tired very quickly. So, having a Snickers bar or a meal from McDonald's would NOT be a good choice!

See the box to the right for good choices for pre-event meals.

A good choice for a pre-event meal would consist of 2 of the following\*

- 1/2 cup of fruit/vegetable juice
- 1 piece of fresh fruit
- Peanut butter sandwich or bagel
- 1 English muffin\*
- 1 cup oatmeal
- 1/2 cup rice

\*Serving sizes are intended as average amount needed. Larger students may require larger serving sizes.

\*\*With jelly or honey, **not** butter or cream cheese



# The Post-Event Meal



A post-event meal is eaten within thirty minutes of a game or practice. The purpose of the post-event meal is to replace what you lost during the event. When you exert yourself, you deplete your blood glucose (carbohydrate), sweat out electrolytes such as sodium, and cause tiny tears in your muscle that need to be repaired with what you eat. The post-event meal should be composed of carbohydrate, protein, and sodium. Carbohydrate replenishes your blood glucose; protein helps repair and build muscle; and sodium restores your electrolyte balance.

See the box to the right for good choices for post-event meals.



A good post-event meal would consist of 1 carbohydrate and 1 protein. The following are examples:

### Carbohydrate-rich foods:

- 1 piece of bread or 1/2 bagel
- 1 piece of fresh fruit
- 1 starchy vegetable (potato, corn)
- 1 serving of pretzels
- 1/2 cup fruit juice

### Protein-rich foods:

- Yogurt
- 1-2 T peanut butter
- 1 cup low-fat milk
- 3 oz. meat
- 1 oz. low-fat cheese