



Fit & Fueled:

Sports Nutrition Basics for the Female Teen Athlete

Food as Fuel. As an athlete, you've made the decision to keep your body healthy and to push yourself competitively. One important component of an athletic lifestyle within your control is what you eat. The food that you put into your body serves as **fuel** for your muscles to allow you to run, swing, and jump. By choosing appropriate energy sources as food, you can get the most out of your hard work. Strive to be an athlete on the field *and* at the table.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates provide your muscles with the energy that they need to move. They serve as the **main source of energy** for short burst exercises.

Foods that are good carbohydrate sources include:

- cottage cheese
- fruit
- hot or cold cereal w/milk
- pasta, rice, couscous
- whole grain breads/bagels
- whole grain crackers
- yogurt

Healthy Fats

Fats provide your body with a source of long-lasting energy.

They work in addition to carbohydrates to make sure that you can sustain longer activities such as distance running or playing soccer.

Work to incorporate healthy fats into your diet, such as:

- avocados
- nuts - almonds, walnuts, sunflower seeds
- nut butters - peanut butter, almond butter
- olive oil

Protein

Protein works to help build and repair your body's tissues. Exercise stresses the muscle fibers, resulting in small tears.

Consuming protein is the optimal way to recover and to get stronger. Try proteins such as:

- egg whites
- fish
- grilled chicken
- ground turkey
- lean pork, extra lean beef
- lentils
- tofu



Hydrating for Success. One of the easiest things that you can do to guarantee that your body is ready to compete is to make sure that you are hydrated. Be sure to drink water both before and after your event. Some sports are easier than others to hydrate during the event. Water works well for most athletes, though sports drinks (i.e. Gatorade, Powerade) are best for activities lasting longer than 60-90 minutes. Stay away from carbonated beverages and juices because they often lead to stomach aches.

Time to Hydrate	Goal of Hydration	Amount to Drink
2 hrs before exercise	Start activity in hydrated state	2 cups of fluid
15 – 30 min before exercise	Start activity in hydrated state	1 – 2 cups of fluid
During exercise	Prevent excessive dehydration	¼ - 1 cup every 15 min (small sips)
After exercise	Replenish fluid & electrolytes	1 ½ - 2 cups fluid per pound lost

Nutrient Timing

Pre-event. At least one hour before your competition, make sure to hydrate and to eat a combination of carbohydrates, lean proteins, and healthy fats. Try **pasta with meat sauce**, **cereal with milk**, or a **turkey sandwich**. Avoid fatty foods (like fast food). Give your body enough time to digest.

During the event/between events. Small snacks that combine carbs and protein can help you during a longer event or between events. Try an **apple with peanut butter**, **crackers and cheese**, a **banana and low-fat chocolate milk**, or **some trail mix**.

Post-event. Although you've already competed, it is still important to think carefully about how you fuel your body. After the event, your body has the chance to recover. Do not delay your post-event replenishment—eating between 20 minutes and 2 hours post-event is best. Try whole grain carbs (**bread, pastas**), lean proteins (**grilled chicken, lentils**), and healthy fats (**avocados, olive oil**).



Try this post-workout smoothie recipe!
Experiment with your favorite fruits!

Yield: 1 serving

1/2 cup low-fat yogurt
1 cup fruit juice (orange juice, pineapple juice) or milk
1/2 to 1 cup fresh, frozen or canned fruit (try bananas & strawberries)

1. place all ingredients in a blender.
2. cover.
3. blend until smooth!

Source: Nancy Clark's Sports Nutrition Guidebook



Websites to Visit for More Information:

- TeensHealth – A guide to eating for sports:
<http://kidshealth.org>
- The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports:
<http://www.fitness.gov/fastfacts.htm>
- Center for Young Women's Health:
<http://www.youngwomenshealth.org>
- Sports, Cardiovascular, and Wellness Nutrition (SCAN)
<http://www.scandpg.org>
- American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons – Sports Nutrition:
<http://orthoinfo.aaos.org>

