



# NUTRITION

LESSON COMPANION



## Quick-Hitters

1

**FOOD IS NEEDED TO FUEL YOUR TANK, SO PLAN TO EAT THE RIGHT FOODS BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER COMPETITION TO MAXIMIZE YOUR PERFORMANCE AND RECOVERY.**

2

**BE A SMART CONSUMER: SHOP THE PERIMETER OF THE GROCERY STORE FIRST AND KNOW HOW TO INTERPRET NUTRITION LABELS.**

3

**THE BEST FUEL FOR THE BODY COMES IN THE FORM OF CARBOHYDRATES, FATS, AND PROTEINS WHICH PROVIDE THE BODY WITH ENERGY AND REPAIR MUSCLE.**

### Coaches' Corner FACTS ON NUTRITION

- *Carbohydrates are needed for energy and fuel for the body while proteins are needed for muscle repair. Fats help assist the body in carrying vitamins and make up the remainder of the calories needed.*
- *Athletes competing in stop-and-go sports, like soccer, lacrosse, and basketball, need to consume carbohydrates during exercise to avoid fatigue and improve their performance. Fruit and sports drinks are good options to consider.*
- *An optimal pre-game meal should be consumed 3-4 hours prior to exercise and should mostly consist of carbohydrates with small amounts of protein and fats.*
- *Proper nutrition combined with adequate rest provides the best remedy for post-workout recovery.*

### TrueSport Activities



#### TRUESPORT CHALK TALK

Ask your group to provide symptoms that might occur if an athlete has not prepared for competition with proper nutrition. Review the information presented in the Coaches' Corner. For more information on what to eat and when, reference the TrueSport Nutrition Guide provided in your coaches' resources.

Follow up with the suggested questions about proper nutrition for competition.

#### Suggested Questions:

1. *Does it matter what you eat before competition? Why?*
2. *What are some good foods to eat before a game or competition to maximize energy levels?*
3. *How many hours before the game or competition should you eat a meal?*
4. *What should you eat if you get hungry in the middle of a game or competition?*
5. *What foods should you eat after you compete to assist with recovery?*

# TRUESPORT IN ACTION

## "Food Tag"

The goal of this activity is for athletes to learn about the different types of food groups in a fun and interactive way.

*Determine game boundaries and have your athletes line up on one end of the space.*

*Assign one athlete to stand in the middle of the space facing their teammates. This athlete will act as the "chef."*

*Other participants should be assigned to one of four food groups (dairy, grains, protein, fruit/vegetables).*

*To start, the chef will call out a type of food (i.e. bread) and all the athletes in the related food group (i.e. grains) will run across, trying not to get tagged by the chef.*

*If tagged, the athletes become additional chefs.*

*If an athlete runs across for an incorrect food group, they are out and should go to the sideline.*

*The chef(s) will continue to call out different food items and the athletes will continue to run across, trying to avoid being tagged. The game is over when there is only one runner left – this will be the winner of the game.*

Note to coaches: feel free to act as the original chef to help the athletes think of food items to call out.

### Suggested Questions:

1. What are some examples of a healthy protein? (Examples: chicken, fish, eggs, dairy, legumes).
2. What is an example of a healthy snack to eat before practice, competition, or a game?
3. Why is fueling your body with healthy food choices important for performance?



Meat & Fish

Bread & Cereals



Milk & Dairy

Fruit



Vegetables

## Look For...

### Symptoms of poor nutrition:

- Low energy or fatigue
- Lessened endurance during regular activity
- Poor snack choices
- Eating habits (choosing to eat very little or not at all)





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# TrueSportCOACH Nutrition



With new trending diets highlighted every year, it's crucial to be part of the conversation with your athletes when it comes to healthy eating habits.

According to Sport Dietitian Mackenzie White, MS, RD, CSSD, LD, CSCS, "Good nutrition is essential in the development of their bodies and brain function. It can potentially aid in the prevention of major health issues like diabetes, obesity, heart disease, cancer, and osteoporosis, so how young athletes fuel their bodies is extremely important."

Encourage your team to avoid these three nutritional strategies, so they aren't deprived of the proper fuel and nutrients they need to compete at their best.

	Detox Diets and Cleanses	Overly Processed 'Health' Foods	Pre- and Post-Workout Supplements
What is it?	<p>Detox and cleansing diets claim to clean your blood and eliminate harmful toxins from the body.</p> <p>However, there are no studies that suggest that these detox diets and cleanses aid in the elimination of any waste or toxins from the body.</p>	<p>Chemically processed foods are usually made from refined ingredients and artificial preservatives.</p> <p>These foods lack the proper nutrients a young athlete needs to stay active and can have adverse side effects on their health when consumed in excess.</p>	<p>Pre-workout supplements contain high amounts of caffeine and sugar, which can be extremely harmful, especially in the smaller bodies of young athletes.</p> <p>Some side effects of caffeine include vomiting, jitters, cramps, high blood pressure, and even cardiac arrest.</p> <p>As for post-workout recovery shakes, consuming more protein than necessary doesn't help athletes in terms of recovery, muscle synthesis, or metabolism.</p>
What you can do to help your athletes:	<p>If your athlete is concerned about cleansing their body of toxins, encourage them to drink water throughout the day to help with digestion and to promote normal bowel function.</p> <p>Young athletes can also opt for healthier food choices, including fruits and vegetables, for added nutrients.</p>	<p>Encourage your athletes to forego the convenience that drives the consumption of overly processed foods and explain how a little extra planning can help them get the nutrients they need.</p> <p>For example, a banana and water pack a better nutritional punch than a sports drink.</p>	<p>Explain to your young athletes that eating a snack or meal post-training as opposed to a protein shake can provide protein, plus many of the other nutrients necessary for recovery.</p> <p>For example, eating an egg provides more benefits than using a creatine supplement after a workout.</p>

In the end, simply combining healthy nutrition and recovery will help your athlete perform to their athletic potential.

Help your team develop a healthy perspective on both nutrition and exercise by discouraging fad diets, skipping meals, and the use of dietary supplements. Instead, encourage them to be intentional about eating nutrient-rich foods, staying hydrated, and creating a recovery plan to get an adequate amount of sleep and rest.

To learn more about how to teach athletes about proper **SPORTS NUTRITION**, check out **Learn.TrueSport.org** and **Teach.TrueSport.org** for insightful articles, videos, and additional resources full of nutrition-related advice.