

NUTRITION & HYDRATION

WHY NUTRITION IS IMPORTANT

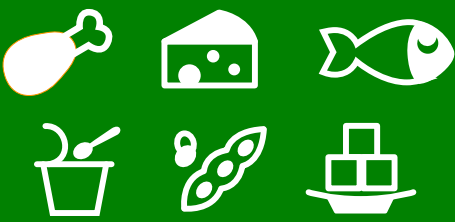
Eating well is important for everyone, especially for athletes. Food is fuel that enables them to train and perform at their best. Two things matter:

QUALITY & QUANTITY

A coach should have a good understanding of basic nutrition facts, and then give general guidance to their athletes. This guidance should include the **importance of eating enough, not skipping meals, consuming more fruits and vegetables, and consuming less processed or overly fatty foods.** Coaches should NOT relay their personal beliefs on nutrition or diets, or direct their athletes on how many grams of fats or carbohydrates they should consume.

PROTEIN

Protein plays a critical role in building muscle and it is especially important that younger athletes are consuming enough. It is found in meats, fish, yogurts, and cheeses. Vegan protein is also found in soy and edamame. Protein is NOT found in fruits, vegetables, or fats like butter and oils.



CARBOHYDRATES

Carbohydrates (carbs) are the body's main source of energy and are an important part of an athlete's diet. Carbs can be categorized as:

SIMPLE

Often sugars found in highly processed foods

COMPLEX*

Beans
Whole Grains
Oatmeal
*Preferred to Simple Carbs



CARBS PAIRED WITH A PROTEIN SOURCE IS AN IDEAL WAY TO REPLENISH THE BODY AFTER TRAINING OR COMPETITION.

BEST TIME TO EAT

Just as what you eat is important, so too is when you eat. Food consumed in the hours before competition should provide energy (carbohydrates) and be easy to digest. Sports drinks are often high in calories and are therefore best limited to practice and competition times.

Encourage your athletes to develop a nutrition routine that works for them, as routines can be helpful and reliable. Coach your athletes to maintain that same routine.



TRAINERS OR SPORTS NUTRITIONALISTS CAN PROVIDE EXCELLENT GUIDANCE

POOR NUTRITION

POOR NUTRITIONAL HEALTH HAS SEVERE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON ATHLETES. Consequences can include mental, emotional, and physical health complications.

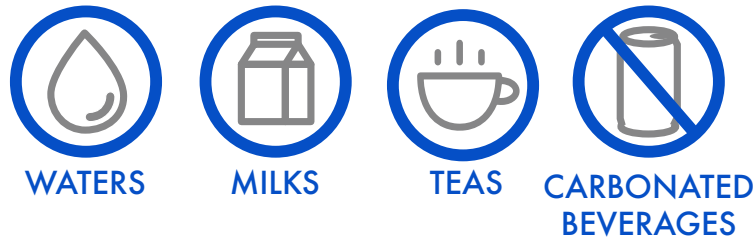
Recently, more young athletes are being diagnosed with RED-S (Relative Energy Deficiency in Sports). RED-S results from chronic underfueling. Symptoms include : **Fatigue, weight loss, slow recovery from workouts, repeated illness, stress fractures, and, in females, the loss of their period.**

HYDRATION & DEHYDRATION

HYDRATION plays a key role in the health and success of an athlete. Proper hydration leads to:

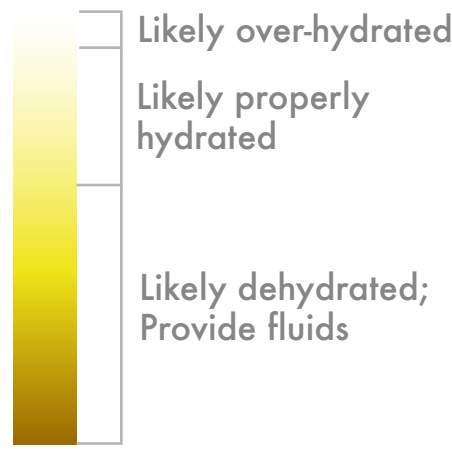
- HIGHER ENERGY**
- BETTER BODY TEMPERATURE REGULATION**
- LOWER LIKELIHOOD OF CRAMPING**

DEHYDRATION may be indicated by dizziness or feeling lightheaded.



EASY WAY TO CHECK HYDRATION STATUS

The color of urine indicates the body's hydration level



IN SUMMARY

Be aware of the signs of nutritional problems in athletes. An athlete that has a sudden drop in performance, a sudden weight gain or loss, or complains of low energy levels may indicate that a conversation is required.

PROPER NUTRITION AND HYDRATION ARE CRITICAL FOR ALL YOUNG ATHLETES. COACHES SHOULD SPEAK OFTEN ABOUT HOW NUTRITION AND HYDRATION AFFECT PERFORMANCE.

$$\begin{matrix} \text{NUTRITION} \\ + \\ \text{HYDRATION} \\ = \\ \text{OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE} \end{matrix}$$

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