



Dark Greens:

Great source of iron, calcium, beta-carotene, which can turn into vitamin A, and helps immune function. Also supplies vitamin K, which helps reduce blood clots, etc.



Chocolate Milk:

Great source of protein, which helps muscle recovery, restores energy, vitamins, increases carbs in the muscle and liver, etc.



Bread:

Great source of fiber, helps digestive system, lowers exposure to heart disease, etc. Also studies show that whole wheat bread helps you mentally and can protect you from Alzheimer's.

Foods for Fuel

Coaches recommend variety for athletic success

Amanda Kuiken with Cross Country:

I recommend athletes eat a balanced diet of proteins, complex carbs, fiber and some fats. They need proteins after workouts to build up muscle, carbs to fuel their workouts, fiber to help with digestion and fats are also necessary for energy use during workouts.

For proteins, some of the foods I would recommend are meats, nuts, cottage cheese, dark green vegetables and peanut butter. For carbs, pasta, granola bars, toast. For fiber, fruits, whole grain pasta/bread and vegetables. For fats, cottage cheese, nuts and fish.

The types of drinks I would recommend to athletes are water, Gatorade (in moderation) and milk.

Days leading up to a sports event should include foods from the food groups I mentioned. Make sure to replace carbohydrates for energy, eat proteins following workouts to build muscle and don't forget fiber and fats.

A balanced diet during the entire season is very important. The day of your event, for breakfast I would recommend a bagel or toast with peanut butter or oatmeal, banana or eggs with toast.

For lunch, you would want to eat a PB and J sandwich with a side of carrots or other veggies and an apple. The day of an event, you should also eat some snacks throughout the day like granola bars, mixed nuts or cracker.

Dinner after the event should be a protein of some kind (pork, turkey, or chicken), veggies, pasta or bread.

The food you put in your body serves as fuel for all activities and body functions. You need to have the right kinds of fuel to perform at your highest level.

Brad Remmert with Football:

We always recommend a balanced diet for our athletes. We try to provide them with specific options from each food group so they can find something they may like eating in each group.

With athletes, we need extra carbohydrates and proteins. They need carbs prior to events and practices. The proteins help with building and repairing muscle.

On game day, we would like them to eat something like pasta, three to three and a half hours prior to game time. Sometimes that's harder to do with the varying start times of the games we have in the UNI-Dome.

Diet and sleep are two areas that athletes often neglect. It's so important for athletes to get eight hours of sleep on a constant basis.

The diet also plays a major role. Some like to skip breakfast. I like to think of the body as a wood burning stove. If you don't put logs in the wood burning stove, it stops functioning properly. Same with your body. It needs good nutrition on a regular basis to perform at a high level.

Players also need to think about what they put in their bodies following a workout. Within 30 minutes following a workout, they should consume something high in protein. This is where some athletes will choose to have a nutritional shake or chocolate milk. Items like this will help in the recovery process.

It takes total commitment to be an athlete that competes at a high level. You need to be committed not only to training and practicing hard, but also healthy nutrition and sleep habits.

Kara Hulse with Basketball:

I recommend that my athletes eat healthy. I have them follow the food pyramid and think about what their body needs to function at high levels of training and competing. For example, we will have spaghetti or lasagna before events to load on carbohydrates for energy. It is important for athletes to not take eating to an extreme as many food disorders can start in this way.

Protein, like chicken and red meats, are good too because it helps to build muscle. Red meats are food people stay away from, but I encourage it as it helps athletes not end up with anemia (low iron). Some specific types of food that I would recommend are chicken, fish, spaghetti, etc. Everything in moderation.

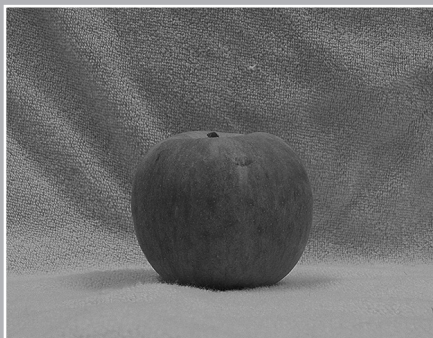
Athletes should eat what they are used to eating the day of the event. Don't change the diet just for the game. Practices are like games, and the same diet should be in place. Eating healthy benefits the athletes because it gives them the proper nutrients and vitamins to keep them healthy with high amounts of energy and focus.

The day before, I have athletes carb load. This would be grains, spaghetti, bread, lasagna, etc. I think it's important for my athletes to eat healthy because they first have to take care of their bodies, and healthy eating is critical for a healthy life. Secondly, if my athletes are eating healthy, they have a better chance of staying injury free.



Carrots:

Great source of fiber, vitamins A, C, K and B8, which helps the cells function in the body. Also good for iron, copper, manganese, etc.



Apple:

Great source of antioxidants (some examples are vitamin C or E), lowers the risk of strokes, diabetes, bad cholesterol, different types of cancer, etc.



Mackenzie Michael Photos

Spaghetti:

Great source of fiber, carbohydrates (which help give you energy and fuels the body), vitamins, minerals, calcium, iron, etc. It is also known to help with your metabolism.



Stephanie Pickett with Volleyball:

I think it's important to eat foods from every food group so that athletes have a wide variety. It is also very important that athletes take in enough calories to fuel their workouts and competitions.

I recommend athletes eat a lot of fruits, vegetables and protein. It is also important to eat carbs to help fuel long practices.

I also think it's important for athletes to stay well hydrated. Athletes' main source of hydration comes from water. Sports drinks can be another source of fluid. Milk is also an important part of an athlete's diet.

I think it's important to keep things in routine. Stay away from new foods on game day or the days leading up to it. Also, make sure that you take in enough fluids to help fuel you on game day.

Healthy eating gives athletes the stamina to compete at a high level. If an athlete doesn't eat enough or doesn't eat well, he or she may not perform at his or her peak potential.

Kenton Engels with Golf:

Traditionally, there isn't a nutrition plan with golfers. This isn't to say however, that nutrition doesn't matter.

For example, deciding to skip meals or eating too much from one category, (for example, sugar), has a direct negative effect on performance.

So while we don't have a recommended set of food groups, we do encourage and recommend a balanced diet.

Eating breakfast the day of the competition is recommended. It is underrated as far as its effects on performance and not just in golf, but in other areas as well.

Eating healthy benefits players more than just golf. To the team, however, it can prevent illness and increase energy and stamina, which is key during a round of golf.

We generally encourage golfers to stick to a routine and try not to snack too much.

For drinks, water is the best. Gatorade is great during meets. Besides breakfast, drinking enough water is important to performance.

Mike Hagensick with Swimming:

I would recommend a diet that has a lot of vegetables. With a variety of vegetables, recovery time and performance are improved. I also encourage lean meats, fruits and healthy nuts.

A drink I would recommend to athletes is chocolate milk because it helps with recovery. Leading up to and the day of competition, I would recommend well-balanced meals. Healthy snacks during the day are all-natural dried fruits, healthy nuts and vegetables like carrots.

By Staff Writer Mackenzie
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