

## Maximizing Your Soccer Performance with Nutrition

Three Goals of an Effective Nutrition Training Plan:

- To provide fuel for optimal physical and mental performance during training & competition
- To maintain adequate hydration
- To facilitate an efficient and effective recovery after training and competition

Components:

- **Five Nutrition Basics for Daily Fueling:**

- **Consume a variety of foods.** Include a wide assortment of foods from each of the Five Food Groups (Grains, Fruits, Vegetable, Protein and Dairy). Counting by meals and snacks—
  - Breakfast: at least 3 food groups represented
  - Lunch & Dinner: at least 4 food groups represented
  - Snacks: at least 2 food groups represented
- **Focus on carbohydrates.** Carbohydrates are the main energy source for soccer athletes. During the season, soccer athletes are encouraged to consume about 8-10 g of carbohydrates per kg body weight. Instead of counting grams of carbohydrates, athletes can use the new USDA's new MyPlate icon as a visual guide for building a healthy training meal.



- **Obtain adequate protein.** Protein is needed for building and repairing muscle, and strengthening the immune function. Recommended protein sources include skinless chicken and turkey, lean red meat, fish, eggs, soy, low-fat dairy products, nuts and legumes.
- **Choose nutrient-rich foods and beverages.** Select whole grain, minimally processed foods as often as possible. Concentrating on nutrient-rich foods will help to ensure athletes receive the 40+ nutrients their bodies need for performance, health, and growth.

- **Eat often.** Food is fuel. Having mini-meals or snacks every few hours can keep an athlete's energy level high for the entire day. An effective eating plan includes eating breakfast, lunch and a carbohydrate snack before practice to fuel muscles. Allow 3-4 hours between lunch and afternoon practice for complete digestion.

- **PreMatch Fueling Recommendations:**

There is no magic food to eat on game day; however precompetition fueling can provide an athlete with 3 basic benefits:

- Providing sugar in the blood (blood glucose) for quick energy
- Topping off carbohydrate stores in muscle. These stores can provide energy especially late in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the match
- Supplying fluids to ensure adequate hydration

The main key is matching food choices with time available before the match to allow adequate time for digestion. Here are some recommended foods based on time available:

<b>Time Before Soccer Match</b>	<b>Recommended Food &amp; Beverages</b>
3 or more Hours	Lean turkey sandwiches, Skinless grilled chicken, Pasta & tomato sauce, Chicken stir-fry, Fajitas with small amounts of lean beef, Eggs , Veggie burger, Minestrone soup, Low fat yogurt based fruit smoothie, Bowl of cereal with low fat milk, Rice bowl with tofu and vegetables, and 100% Fruit juices
2-3 Hours	Low fiber cereal and nonfat milk, Nonfat fruit flavored yogurt, Pancakes/ French Toast, Bread, Fresh or dried fruit, Pretzels, 100% Fruit Juices
1-2 Hours	Cereal/Granola bar, Pretzels, Toast, Graham crackers, Fresh or dried fruit, 100% Fruit juices, Sports drinks, Water

- **Developing a Daily Hydration Plan**

Nothing will tire out soccer athletes faster than dehydration. If players start a game or practice in even a slightly dehydrated state, it is nearly impossible to overcome during the match. Following a daily hydration schedule can help ensure that soccer athletes will be adequately hydrated. Here is a general hydration plan but be sure to modify as needed. To monitor hydration status, check the color of your urine. A light –yellow color signifies adequate hydration.

## A Daily Hydration Plan

Time	Beverage	Amount
Throughout the day	Water	As needed/desired
At Meals	Low Fat Milk, 100% Fruit Juice, Water	8 oz or more as desired
Two hours before Exercise	Water , Sports Drinks	16 oz
15-30 minutes before Exercise	Water, Sports Drinks	8 oz
During Training /Matches	Water, Sports Drinks	4-8oz every 15-20 minutes
Within 30 minutes after training/match ends	Chocolate Milk or Water + Carbohydrate containing snack	8 oz or as needed
Within two hours after training/match	Water, milk, 100% fruit juices	18-24 oz per pound of weight loss during training

- **Promoting an Efficient and Effective Recovery**

An athlete's body is primed for refueling as soon as he/she walks off the field. For a quick & complete refueling of muscle glycogen (the storage form of carbohydrates), Consume a carbohydrate rich snack along with a small amount of protein within 30 minutes after a practice or match followed by a light carbohydrate rich meal within 2 hours. Here are several carbohydrate & protein recovery snack ideas:

- Chocolate milk
- Chicken Noodle soup
- Yogurt or milk based fruit smoothie
- 1 oz cheese stick with crackers or pretzels
- Peanut butter and jelly sandwich
- Ready-to-eat cereal with dried fruit and low-fat milk

*Prepared by*

*Amy Reuter MS,RD*

*Seattle FoodNut*

206.465.7000

amy@seattlefoodnut.com

www.SeattleFoodnut.com