

Food for Young Athletes

What to eat while you are training

- Normal healthy eating should be your goal while training.
- Aim to spread intake across the day – 6 small meals (3 meals and 3 snacks) rather than 3 large meals (Always have a balanced breakfast, lunch and dinner, even if you have no training scheduled for that day).
- Extra snacks can be included around training to make sure you have plenty of energy to get the most out of a training session.
- What should my plate look like?
 - Training days – 1/3 plate carbohydrate, 1/3 plate protein and 1/3 plate salad/ vegetables
 - Non-training days – ¼ plate carbohydrate, ¼ plate protein and ½ plate salad/vegetables

Breakfast: Wholegrain cereal (eg: Weet-Bix, Sustain, Just Right, Porridge), Low fat milk, 1 piece fresh fruit, 1 slice wholegrain toast with jam.

Lunch: 1 or 2 sandwiches/ 1 bread roll /1 wrap with lean meat, cheese tomato and lettuce and a small tub of yoghurt

Dinner: Lean meat, chicken or fish with serve of potato/sweet potato and at least 3 different vegetables.

Super Snacks

- Pikelets + jam / honey
- Raisin Toast + LF ricotta & honey
- Scones + jam
- English muffins/ crumpets
- Yoghurt or LF milk + fruit
- Muesli bars/cereal bars
- Fresh, canned or dried fruit e.g. banana
- Baked beans / spaghetti
- Noodles
- Fruit smoothies/ milkshakes
- Up & Go / Sustagen
- Boiled potato
- Corn cobs
- Breakfast cereal
- Bread rolls
- Sandwich with vegemite/jam/honey
- Cracker biscuits with cheese

During Training and Competition

You need to go to training and to events with snacks and meals prepared. Food at venues is not always suitable for hockey players to use around events. Use a small esky or small cooler bag to keep food fresh.

Before Training or Event

Your pre event meal should have been tested prior to any major competition. Some examples that other athletes use:

- Toast with margarine and jam, glass of orange juice, breakfast bar.
- Liquid meal supplement like Sustagen or Up and Go
- Breakfast cereal and milk
- Pancakes with jam/maple syrup and glass of milk
- Fruit salad and low fat yoghurt
- Crumpets or fruit toast with jam/honey

Always include some water!! It is vital for preparation for your event. Most athletes will have a main meal 2-4 hours before an event. Foods that are lower in fibre can help with stomach discomfort, especially if you are nervous. Drink small amount of water before and during meals.

Rebecca Hay
Accredited Sports Dietitian &
Nutrition Consultant
P: +61 431 707 746
E: rebecca@theathleteskitchen.com.au



Nicole Dynan
Accredited Practising Dietitian &
Sports Dietitian
P: +61 400 945 503
E: nicole@theathleteskitchen.com.au

After Training or event

As for the pre-event meal, water should be included as an important part of any post event plan. A snack should also be included within 30min of completion of training or your event. If you do not feel like eating have a liquid snack.

In between games

Practice these ideas during training sessions to see what works best for you.

30-60min between games: Food should be easy to consume and rapidly digested.

- fluid, sports drink, juice and fruit.

1-2 hours between games:

- sandwiches made on white bread with honey/jam, cereal or breakfast or muesli bars

More than 2 hours between games: make sure you drink small amounts regularly.

- A similar meal to 1-2 hours but more substantial. Sandwiches, muffins, bread rolls, pasta salad, creamy rice and fruit and pancakes.

What about lollies and chocolate??????

Save them for parties and special occasions or lollies event days only- they are not every day foods, even if you are an athlete!

Fluids

Start training and competitions well hydrated.

Having small amounts of fluid regularly and with food will help you stay well hydrated. When training have small sips of fluid at breaks. For long sessions (over 90min) take 2 bottles to training – one with water and one with a flavoured fluid (this can be sports drink/cordial) – drink regularly with a couple of sips from each bottle. Use the plain water last to ensure mouth is fresh.

Some challenges

It is important that any issues surrounding foods are identified. Sometimes we can have problems with particular foods because of the way they look, the way we need to eat it (using particular utensils) or how much of it we eat.

It is necessary to identify these issues over time and work on them patiently. Issues such as these may require the assistance of a doctor, dietitian or suitably qualified health professional.

High Energy Drink recipe

Fruit Surge

250ml skim milk

1 cup tinned fruit

1 Tbspn skim milk powder

2 Tbspn Low fat yoghurt

Blend all ingredients and serve Nutrition analysis: 1885Kj, Protein 26g, CHO 76g, Fat 5.5g

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