

Nutritional Advice



There is no one "**miracle food**" or supplement that can supply all your nutritional needs. Certain foods supply mainly proteins, other foods contain vitamins and minerals, and so on. The key to balancing your diet is to combine different foods so that nutrient deficiencies in some foods are made up by nutrient surpluses in others.

Eating a variety of foods is the secret.



Food Groups Pyramid

This guide divides food into five groups based on the nutrients each group provides. By eating the recommended amounts of food from each group daily, you can greatly increase your ability to get all the nutrients your body needs--and that will improve your ability on the playing field.



Food Group Breakdown



Milk, Yogurt, and Cheese Group

(Milk, yogurt, and all types of cheese)

Major Nutrients Supplied

Provides calcium. Also contains protein, vitamin A, and riboflavin (B₂).



Recommended Amount for Teenage Athletes

3 servings daily.

1 serving is

- an 8-ounce glass of milk
- 8 ounces of yogurt
- 1 1/2 ounces of natural, unprocessed cheese

Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs, and Nuts Group

(Beef, pork, lamb, poultry, fish, eggs, dry peas, dry beans, peanuts, peanut butter)

Major Nutrients Supplied

Good source of protein. These foods also contain thiamin (B₁), riboflavin (B₂), niacin, iron, and zinc.



Recommended Amount for Teenage Athletes

2 to 3 servings daily.

1 serving is

- 3 ounces of lean, cooked meat
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup of cooked dry beans, peas, or lentils
- 4 tablespoons of peanut butter

Vegetable Group

(All vegetables--including dark green, deep yellow, and starchy vegetables--and their juices)

Major Nutrients Supplied

Provides vitamins and minerals that complement other food sources. Good sources of Vitamin C include tomatoes, broccoli, and brussel sprouts. Good sources of Vitamin A include carrots, broccoli, spinach, greens, pumpkin, and sweet potatoes.



Recommended Amount for Teenage Athletes

3 to 5 servings daily.

1 serving is

- 1/2 cup of cooked vegetables
- 1/2 cup of chopped raw vegetables
- 1 cup of leafy raw vegetables such as lettuce or spinach
- 3/4 cup (6 ounces) of juice

Fruit Group

(All fruits and their juices)

Major Nutrients Supplied

Good source of many vitamins and minerals. Good sources of vitamin C include citrus fruits and their juices, melons, and strawberries. Apricots are good sources of vitamin A.



Recommended Amount for Teenage Athletes

2 to 4 servings daily.

1 serving is

- 1 whole fruit such as a medium apple, banana, or orange
- 1/2 grapefruit
- 3/4 cup (6 ounces) of juice
- 1/2 cup (4 ounces) of berries
- 1/2 cup (4 ounces) of cooked or canned fruit
- 1/4 cup of dried fruit

Bread, Cereal, Rice, and Pasta Group

(All whole-grain and enriched breads and cereals, such as cooked or ready to eat cereals, bread, macaroni, grits, spaghetti, crackers, noodles, and rice)

Major Nutrients Supplied

Contributes complex carbohydrates (starch and fiber) and significant amounts of protein, B vitamins, and iron.



Recommended Amount for Teenage Athletes

6 to 11 servings daily.

1 serving is

- 1 slice of bread
- 1/2 hamburger bun or English muffin
- 1 small roll, biscuit, or muffin
- 3 to 4 small or 2 large crackers
- 1/2 cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta
- 1 ounce ready-to-eat breakfast cereal

Meal Plans

Pregame Meal Planner

What you eat every day can have a big effect on how you perform. What you eat right before an event can be critical. Wrong choices can be disastrous. Right choices can give you that competitive edge. The **Pregame Meal Planner** will help you make wise food choices.

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No one pregame meal is right for every athlete or every event, but some food choices are much smarter than others. General guidelines for individual food selection and meal planning are coming up next. Make sure your pregame meal plans follow these guidelines.

The Guidelines:

1. Allow enough time for digestion. Eat the meal at least three hours before an event.
2. Choose a meal that's high in starch. Starch is easy to digest and helps steady the levels of blood sugar.
3. Consume only moderate amounts of protein. Protein foods take longer to digest than starch. And high-protein meals may lead to increased urine production, which can add to dehydration.
4. Limit fats and oils. They take too long to digest.
5. Restrict sugary foods. Sweets can cause rapid energy swings in blood sugar levels and result in low blood sugar and less energy.
6. Avoid foods and drinks that contain caffeine. Caffeine stimulates the body to increase urine output, which can contribute to dehydration problems, and a full bladder can be very uncomfortable.
7. Watch out for foods that produce gas. Certain raw vegetables, fruits, or beans may cause problems for some young athletes. Be aware of the foods that cause you problems and avoid them just before an event.
8. Within these guidelines, choose foods you like to eat.
9. Remember to drink plenty of fluids with your pregame meal.

Up next are some nutritious pregame meal plans that fit the pregame guidelines.

At least three of the five major groups are represented in each meal.

These meals are only suggestions.

You can think up many more that you would like to eat.



Pregame Meal Plan Ideas

Meal #1

- Cereal (avoid highly sweetened cereals)
- Banana slices
- Milk (low-fat or skim)
- Toast/jam
- Pineapple juice
- Water

Meal #2

- Chicken noodle soup
- Crackers
- Orange
- Low-fat yogurt
- Water

Pregame Meal Plan Ideas

Meal #3

- Poached Egg
- Toast/jam
- Milk (low-fat or skim)
- Orange juice
- Water

Meal #4

- Pancakes (limit butter and syrup)
- Applesauce
- Milk (low-fat or skim)
- Grape juice
- Water

Pregame Meal Plan Ideas

Meal #5

- Turkey sandwich/bread and lettuce
- Apple
- Milk (low-fat or skim)
- Tomato juice
- Water

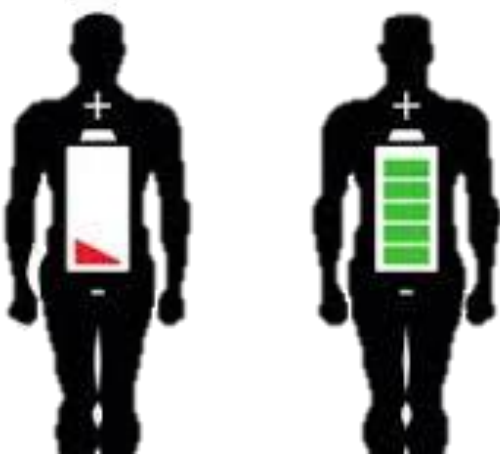
Meal #6

- Cottage cheese/peach
- Breadsticks
- Milk (low-fat or skim)
- Apple juice
- Water

Meal #7

- Spaghetti/tomato sauce
- Bread
- Milk (low-fat or skim)
- Orange juice
- Water

Keeping Energy Levels High



Keeping your energy levels up for peak performance isn't easy. It doesn't just happen. High energy levels are the result of good eating and exercise habits. If you don't pay attention to either of these factors, your performance can suffer. Keeping Energy Levels Up will help you plan a diet for a winning performance.

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If you eat generous amounts of the main dishes listed next, these meals supply over 1,000 calories and at least one-third of the recommended daily allowances (RDA) of most nutrients for teens. If you eat one serving of each food, the meals supply 55% to 62% of the energy as carbohydrate, 14% to 17% of the energy as protein, and 22% to 30% of the energy as fat.

High Energy Meal Ideas

Meal #1

- Chicken and noodles/gravy
- Whole wheat bread/jelly
- Candied sweet potato
- Fresh or cooked broccoli
- Lowfat milk*
- Orange juice

Meal #2

- Hamburger/bun
- Boston baked beans
- Pear halves/lettuce
- Cantaloupe
- Lowfat milk*
- Grape juice

Meal #3

- Baked or broiled pork chop
- Baked sweet potato
- Lettuce and tomato salad/dressing
- Banana
- Whole wheat bread/jelly
- Lowfat Milk*
- Pineapple juice

High Energy Meal Ideas

Meal #4

- Spaghetti and meatballs/Parmesan cheese
- Italian bread/margarine
- Carrot sticks
- Peach halves/lettuce
- Lowfat milk*
- Apple juice

Meal #5

- Macaroni and cheese
- Cooked green beans
- Fruit salad
- Whole wheat bread/jelly/peanut butter
- Lowfat milk*
- Orange juice

Meal #6

- Roast beef/stewed tomatoes
- Baked potato/margarine
- Whole wheat bread/jelly
- Fresh fruit of choice
- Lowfat milk*
- Cranberry juice

*2 percent, 1 percent, and skim milk are all considered lowfat.

Keeping Fluid Levels Up





Water is a necessity for all life. Without it, life can't exist. Even when water is limited, living organisms suffer. You are no exception. For young athletes like yourself, not enough water means you can't do your best. It can even cause serious health problems.

Just Satisfying Thirst Is Not Enough

Thirst is your body's signal that you need to drink water. By the time you feel thirsty, you may have already lost one percent to two percent of your water--and that's enough to hurt performance. But just drinking enough to satisfy your thirst may not supply your body's needs. If you drink only enough to satisfy your thirst, your body may take up to 24 hours to fully rehydrate its cells and regain maximum performance.

When you participate in a sporting event or practice session, follow these guidelines:

- Don't wait until you are thirsty before drinking water.
- Drink more than enough to satisfy your thirst.
- Drink more than you think you need before an event or practice to make sure you are fully rehydrated.

AVOID Drinks with Caffeine




*Some drinks that have caffeine, such as colas and iced tea, are advertised as thirst quenchers. Do not use caffeine-containing beverages as fluid rehydration drinks shortly before, during, and after a practice or competition. Caffeine acts as a diuretic. It increases urine output and can promote dehydration.

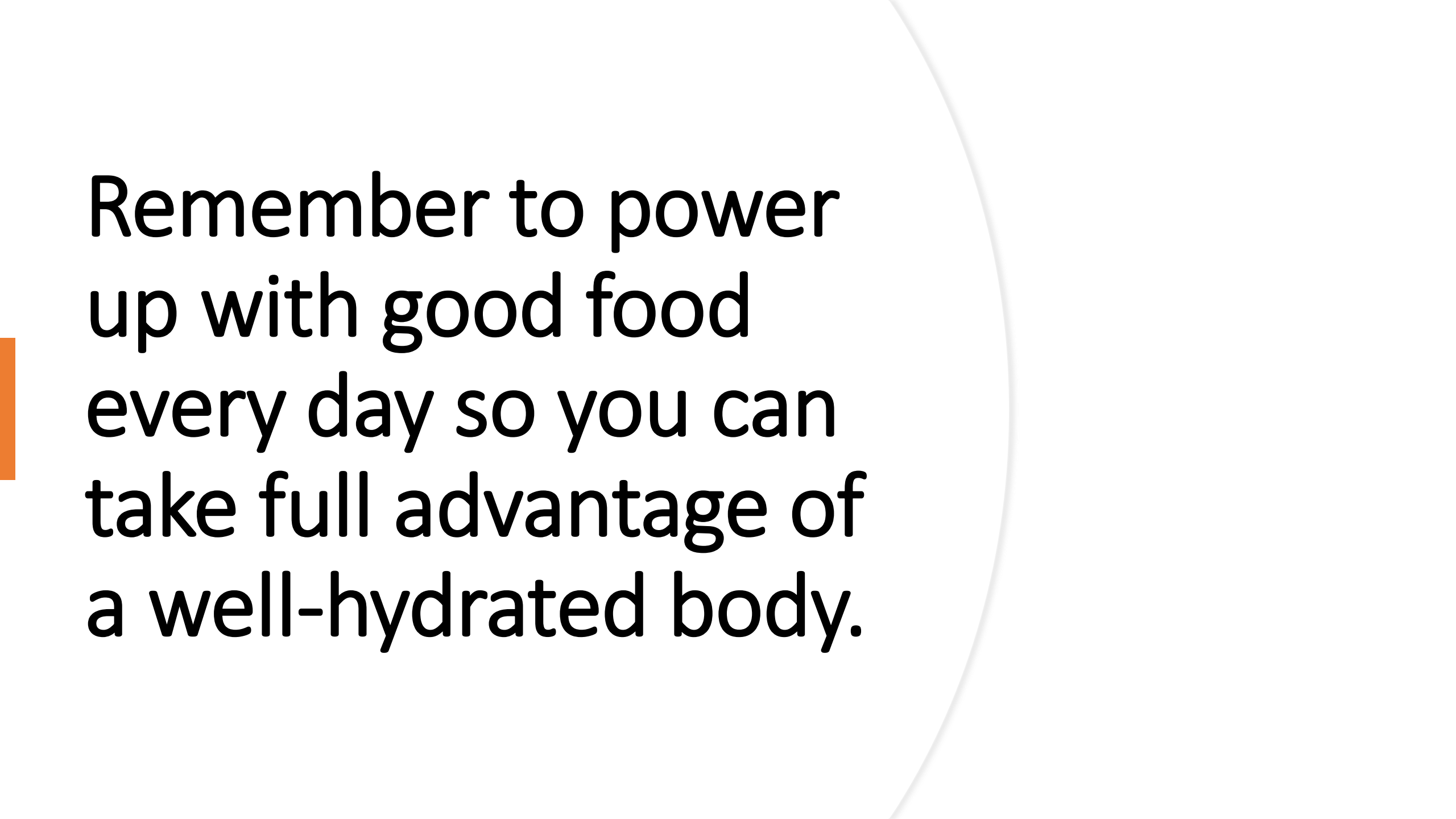
Getting It All Down

Take every opportunity to drink water and other appropriate fluids. Drink fluids every day, even when you are not thirsty. That means drinking at mealtime--and snack time, too! As a competition or practice approaches, follow these guidelines:

- Drink plenty of appropriate fluids the 24 hours before an event. Give your body every opportunity to become fully rehydrated.
- If you eat a pregame meal three or more hours before an event, make sure that ample fluids are included--at least two cups (16 ounces).
- About 15 to 30 minutes before the start of competition or practice, drink a cup or more of fluids. This will help ensure that your tissues are fully rehydrated at the start.
- During the activity, drink six to eight ounces of fluids every 15 to 20 minutes. Drinking moderate amounts frequently is the best way to keep fluid levels up. If you drink too much too quickly, you may develop stomach cramps and other discomfort.
- Drink plenty of fluids after the activity.
- Remember to drink fluids before you get thirsty. If you wait until you're thirsty, your body may have already lost enough water to hurt your performance.



Getting it all down means you can perform at your best levels. Your endurance will be long lasting, and you won't become as tired. You will have that extra edge when you need it most--whether it's the last few minutes of the contest or the last 10 meters before the finish line.



Remember to power up with good food every day so you can take full advantage of a well-hydrated body.