YSN

#REFUELRIGHTFEELRIGHT

Carbs

Did you know there are two types of carbohydrates? There are right and wrong ways and optimum timings to consume both!

Simple Fast release carbs are normally sugary, and are easily ingested. Examples include: White bread, Sweets, Chocolate

Complex These take longer to break down and generally have a wider nutritional value. Starchy, fibrous carbs offer prolonged release energy. Examples include: Pasta, Potatoes, Vegetables

Carb Choices

Know when to take in the correct choice of carbohydrates, giving you energy to use at the right time.

Before Sport Slow release carbs at least 1-2 hours prior to top up your energy levels and ensure you have enough energy to perform optimally.

After Sport Refuel right by replenishing depleted energy stores with simple fast release carbs to kick start recovery. Refuel within 30-60mins.

Supporting:

- Decision making
- Energy Levels
- Perform at your best
- Academic performance

Protein

Essential for growth repair and muscle function.

Sources: Proteins are made up of essential and non-essential amino acids. Examples include: Meat, eggs, quorn, nuts, cottage cheese.

Best to consume: Adequate intake of protein spaced throughout the day is optimal for muscle recovery, repair and growth. Include a source of protein with every meal alongside 30-90mins after sport

Fats

Fats are an essential part of a youth athletes diet, needed for energy, storage and insulation, providing fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E and K) alongside essential fatty acids (omega-3 and omega-6). Consume fats well before sport and as part of your rest/recovery day nutrition. Fats though, are not all created equal...

Monounsaturated Avocados, olive oil and nuts. Have these in small regular amounts.

Polyunsaturated Oily fish, sesame and sunflower seeds. High in omega 3 & 6

Saturated Meat, dairy and cheese. Essential but in smaller amounts.

Transfats Processed/fast food, biscuits. Low nutritional value so limit these wherever possible

Vitamins

Have to be taken in – your body can not produce these itself

A Needed for healthy vision, skin, bones and other tissues in the body. Found in fish, liver, butter and cheese.

B B Vitamins support many functions including tiredness & fatigue. Sources include fish, poultry and soy.

C Needed for normal function of the immune system. Citrus fruits are great sources.

D Needed for bone development and growth. Typically found in mushrooms, fish and fruit.

Minerals

These minerals are essential for youth athletes;

Calcium Bones grow rapidly for youth athletes, so we need to support normal development and growth. The best sources are dairy products.

Iron Iron binds oxygen to haemoglobin within red blood cells, which is important for blood oxygen transport to working muscles. Lack of iron places a high risk of anaemia (particularly for female athletes). Sources include: Red meat, liver, green leafy vegetables

Should you eat before early morning sessions

A: Yes! Failing to eat before a morning workout puts you at risk of low blood glucose levels, light headedness, nausea and poor performance.

Some fuel is better than no fuel at all, so aim to have a nutrition high-carb snack, and remember to drink plenty of water to replace lost electrolytes through sweat during the night. Heres some suggestions:

- Porridge
- Banana on Toast
- Granola Bar

Hydration

Youth athletes cant regulate body temperature as efficiently as adults and do not sweat as much, so getting this right is extremely important.

Thirst is a poor indicator of hydration, so the easy way to stay hydrated is to carry a water bottle and sip it throughout the day.

Remember to pay particular attention to periods imediatley before, during and after sport.

What about sports drinks?

Avoid these wherever possible. The only time they're necessary is during intense competition where you may need to replenish energy stores on the go.

The 3 R's of Recovery

- **R**ehydrate – Fluids
- **R**efuel – Carbs
- **R**egenerate – Protein

Post Training Recovery

Objectives:

- Replace blood sugar levels - CARBS
- Kickstart muscle re-synthesis - PROTEIN
- Replenish lost electolytes - WATER

Aim to consume a wholesome blend of carbs, protein and plenty of liquid to replace lost electrolytes. Avoid fast food as these are generally high in fats and contain low nutritional value.

Tip: Chocolate milk or a banana are good options for athletes on the go!

Rest Day Nutrition (aka Growth Days)

Use rest days to your advantage.

Key: Chose fibrous Carbs & more Protein – Your body is still recovering up to 48hours after intense training. Higher intakes of polyunsaturated fats (e.g. Omega-3) can help to reduce inflammation and aid the recovery process.

Increased vegetable intakes with each meal (especially those high in antioxidants) helps to reduce the free radical damage from training and can subsequently reduce muscle soreness.

Top Tip: A Sunday Dinner is perfect for recovery, growth and nourishment!

Rest Day Nutrition (Food Choices)

Fibrous Carbs

Fats

Proteins

Away Days

Prior preparation prevents poor performance!

Dont get caught out! Away days and competitions/meets can be long days in unfamiliar territory, meaning expensive and potentially substandard food is an offer.

Key: Prepare your meals in advance and bring them with you in flasks, Tupperware and cool-boxes.

Youth Athlete Meal Plans

Download the YSN App for free meal plans, made especially for parents of youth athletes. We cover everything from breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks and deserts!

We also feature real life meal plans from elite athletes so you can copy your faves!

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