

ENGLAND HOCKEY

HOCKEY FACTSHEET 5



NUTRITION

Like adults, young athletes need adequate nutrition to maintain health and to optimise performance, but unlike adults, nutrition for youngsters must provide for physical growth and development also.

Young athletes lives are often characterised by busy schedules, peer pressure and body dissatisfaction. As a result they often skip meals, snack on junk food, diet and experiment with dietary supplements. So what can we do to ensure your young athlete eats well?

More than anyone involved in a young persons sporting life, their parents can have the most direct impact in ensuring they consume enough of the right foods to enhance not only their general health and growth but also their sporting performance.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Children need more energy than do adolescents or adults during sporting activities
- Variety is the key to a balanced diet. There is no one perfect food or supplement that can supply the 40-plus nutrients the body needs for top performance
- The best way for a young athlete to get the right balance of these nutrients is to eat a variety of food types that are high in carbohydrates and low in fat
- Carbohydrates are the most important energy provider in an athletes diet
- Although everyone needs some fat in their diet, most people eat too much
- The nutrients essential to good health and performance include carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, minerals, fat, fibre and water
- Do not use supplements to make up for a poor diet. Only use supplements where there is proof of a deficiency in a certain nutrient that cant be obtained from a balanced diet

The above nutrients can be found in the following foods:

NUTRIENT TYPE	WHERE FOUND
Carbohydrates	Potatoes, bread, breakfast cereals, fruit, sugar, rice, pasta
Fibre	Some breakfast cereals, wholemeal bread
Fat	Butter, margarine, fried foods, crisps, chocolate, fatty meat, oils, ice cream, cheese, burgers, chips
Protein	Meat, fish, poultry, eggs, cheese, milk, yoghurt, cereals, beans, lentils, peas, nuts, tofu, soya
Vitamins & Minerals	Found in the above food substances in varying amounts. Adequate source found in a balanced diet

A basic daily food plan is as follows:

NO. OF SERVINGS OF FOOD TYPES	ONE SERVING EQUIVALENTS
3 to 5 servings of vegetables	1/2 cup
2 to 4 servings of fruits	1/2 cup or 1 piece
6 to 11 servings of bread, cereal, rice or pasta	1 slice of bread or 1/2 cup
3 servings of low fat milk, yoghurt or cheese	1 cup or slice
2 to 3 servings of meat, poultry, fish or cooked dry beans or peas	Piece of meat the size of a deck of cards or cup of cooked beans/peas or 2 Tbsp of peanut butter

If athletes need more than this basic food plan provides, eating more fruits, vegetables, breads, cereals, rice, pasta, or sports beverages could give them the calories and nutrients they need for good health and top performance. Once these nutrition basics are met, a balanced diet can also include some foods high in added sugars and fats, such as cookies, pastries, cakes, soft drinks and snack foods to help meet energy needs.

BALANCE IS THE KEY – WHATS TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE?

TOO MUCH	TOO LITTLE
<input type="checkbox"/> Total Fat = More than 20g	<input type="checkbox"/> Total Fat = Less than 3g
<input type="checkbox"/> Saturated Fats = More than 5g	<input type="checkbox"/> Saturated Fats = less than 1g
<input type="checkbox"/> Fibre = More than 3g	<input type="checkbox"/> Fibre = Less than 0.5g
<input type="checkbox"/> Sodium = More than 0.5g	<input type="checkbox"/> Sodium = Less than 0.1g

Young athletes tend to eat and drink what is available and convenient. It is very important that the families of athletes plan their meals and snacks so they have the variety and types of foods they need at places and times when they eat.

SNACKS – what to avoid/what to encourage

Encourage – High Carbohydrate Snacks	Avoid – High Fat Snacks
<input type="checkbox"/> Bananas, Dried Fruit, Malt Loaf	<input type="checkbox"/> Crisps
<input type="checkbox"/> Nutrigrain, Fruesli	<input type="checkbox"/> Biscuits (unless low fat)
<input type="checkbox"/> Rice Krispie Squares	<input type="checkbox"/> Sausage Rolls
<input type="checkbox"/> Go-Ahead Range	<input type="checkbox"/> Pork Pies
<input type="checkbox"/> Jaffa Cakes	<input type="checkbox"/> Burgers
<input type="checkbox"/> Milk Shakes/smoothies	<input type="checkbox"/> Fries
<input type="checkbox"/> Muller Rice	<input type="checkbox"/> Chocolate
<input type="checkbox"/> Fruit Scones	<input type="checkbox"/> Cakes
<input type="checkbox"/> Bagels/Low fat sandwiches	<input type="checkbox"/> High Fat Sandwiches

In some instances it may be of help to gain advice from a sports nutritionist or dietician in order to put together a game plan for a balanced diet, specific to one athletes particular needs. This will enable them to plan nutritious meals at home as well as on the road.