



Eat Well, Live Well

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Dietitians of Canada
Les diététistes du Canada

Step Right Up to Healthy Eating

Fueling the Young Athlete – Two Case Studies

Sport nutrition is a topic area that can stir up lots of questions and confusion. There are no short cuts or magic bullets to achieve personal best sport performances; only hard work along with good nutrition is required.

Here are two examples of typical questions that young athletes may have when trying to improve their athletic results:

Meet Cathy

Cathy is a 15 year old active artistic gymnastic. She wants to lose some body fat to improve her power and flexibility. This is how Cathy can reach her goal:



- Eat often with three meals & two snacks each day (morning and afternoon)
- Choose loads of fresh fruits and vegetables for great nutrients, fibre, and water content
- Reduce extra calories by limiting fats, oils, and most “other” foods, such as slushy drinks, iced tea, pop, and candy bars (the occasional treat is ok)
- Push fluids to make sure she is well hydrated and not eating when she’s thirsty
- Keep track of her food choices to see if she is sticking to her plan
- Meet with a dietitian to help plan her nutrition

Dietitians provide food and nutrition information you can trust. Find a dietitian in your area at www.dietitians.ca/find or call 1-888-901-7776.

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Meet Brandon

Brandon is a 14-year-old hockey player who is anxious to build muscle. He is thinking about taking a creatine supplement, because he thinks this might help him gain weight. Here is how Brandon can safely build muscle:

- Avoid taking creatine – this only leads to gaining water in muscles & no research exists on creatine safety for young athletes
- Eat 6 – 7 times a day SEVEN days a week (including weekends!)
- Add 500 to 1000 Calories more to what he usually eats (e.g. 1 homemade shake & large bowl of cereal with whole milk daily)
- Plan high energy snacks (e.g. cheese & crackers, trailmix, sandwiches, bagel with peanut butter or cream cheese)
- Keep track of his food choices to see if he is sticking to his plan
- Meet with a dietitian to help plan his nutrition

Being active in recreational and competitive sports helps children and teens develop lifelong healthy habits. Good nutrition supports health and sport performances.

Download a copy of our “Fueling the Young Athlete” factsheet from the DC web site at www.dietitians.ca/eatwell

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