



Youth & Teen Basketball Nutrition

What should I be eating day-to-day?

On a caloric basis, 45-65% carbohydrates (pasta, breads, fruits, cereal), 10-30% protein (meat, nuts, beans), 25-35% fat (oils, butter). Make whole grains, fruits, and vegetables a large part of your diet, because these foods contain more fiber, vitamins, and minerals than fried foods, pastries, chips, and soda.

How much should I be eating?

To calculate the amount of calories you should be consuming, please use one of these websites:

More basic option: Eating Health Calculator

<http://www.bcm.edu/cnrc/healthyeatingcalculator/eatingCal.html>

More detailed option: Myplate.gov SuperTracker

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/supertracker-tools/supertracker.html>

Carbohydrates

Your body stores carbohydrates as glycogen, which is quickly available to use as fuel. Carbohydrate consumption during high-intensity competition can prevent muscle glycogen depletion and can improve performance.

Protein

Your protein needs can easily be met if you are eating enough food from a balanced diet, and you avoid empty calories (foods that are high in added sugars and/or solid fats with little nutritional value). Generally, you do not need to consume protein bars and/or shakes.

Fat

You need fat in your diet, so do not try to eliminate it completely. Instead, incorporate omega-3 fat-containing foods like fatty fish (tuna, salmon),

walnuts, and flaxseeds into your diet. This type of fat is heart healthy and prevents inflammation. Olive and canola oil, or foods containing them, are also monounsaturated fat that is heart healthy.

Before a game or workout

Ideally, eat your pregame meal about 3 hours before a game or workout followed by a lighter snack about an hour before. But if this isn't possible, try to eat at least an hour before a game or workout. Stick with high-carbohydrate, low-fiber, low protein options the closer to the game or workout time you get. Also, the closer to the game or workout time, the fewer calories you should consume.

During a game

Primarily carbohydrate-containing snacks are an excellent way to replenish your glycogen stores for the second half. Sports drinks are a good option for those not comfortable eating at halftime or shortly before a game.

After a game or workout

Consume a carbohydrate- and protein-containing snack or meal as soon as possible after finishing your game or workout to replenish your glycogen stores. During the first hour after exercise, your body is most efficient at producing glycogen.

Fluids

Fluid intake is important; a 2% or greater loss of body weight from fluid loss can decrease performance. To determine your fluid loss, weigh yourself before and after physical activity. About 3 cups of fluids are needed for each pound lost. If you're sweating, make sure you're drinking during breaks.

Make sure you're adequately hydrated by drinking water throughout the day. Feeling thirsty means that you may already be dehydrated, so do not depend on thirst to guide your fluid intake.

Sports drinks can provide carbohydrates, fluids, and electrolytes that you lose from sweat. Electrolyte containing fluids like sports drinks can be especially useful in hot/humid environments. But, they also provide calories that you might not need, so consume only if needed.

Iron

Females are particularly at risk of not getting enough iron in their diet, which is needed to efficiently transport oxygen in the body so that athletes can perform at their optimal level. Foods that are good sources of iron include red meat, eggs, dark green leafy vegetables, and dried fruit. The form of iron in red meat is absorbed better than from the other sources listed above; still 3 ounces of red meat provides ~3 mg of iron.

Vegetarian iron sources are better absorbed when consumed with vitamin C- containing foods like citrus fruits, strawberries, melons, dark leafy green vegetables, and tomatoes. It can be a challenge for females to get enough iron through diet alone (see table below). They may need a supplement to meet their needs.

Age	mg/d
9-13 males & females, >18 years old males	8
14-18 years old males	11
14-18 year old females	15
≥19 year old females	18

Potassium

Most people don't consume enough potassium. The concern for athletes is that low potassium levels can lead to cramping. Tomatoes, beans, milk, potatoes, cantaloupe, bananas, watermelon, and avocados are all good sources of potassium.

Sample diet for a 7:00 PM game (drink water with each meal snack & throughout day)

Breakfast (7:30-8:00 AM) ideas

Oatmeal, cream of wheat, or other hot cereal
Cold Cereal with low-fat milk or soy milk
Whole-grain toast/bagels, pancakes, or waffles
Peanut Butter
Yogurt
Fruit
Eggs

Lunch (12:00 PM) & dinner (4:00 PM) ideas

Low-fat sandwiches with whole grain bread/rolls
Beans (black, pinto, kidney, garbanzo)
Lean meat (turkey, chicken, pork) or fish
Baked potatoes with veggies and cheese
Pasta (preferably whole grain with low-fat sauces)
Whole grain tortillas or whole grain breads
Rice (preferably whole grain)
Hummus
Peanut Butter
Fruits & Vegetables
Salads

Pregame snack (6:45 PM) ideas

Sports drinks, fruit, cereal, fruit, granola, or bar;
half of wheat bagel with jam, cereal/fruit bar, yogurt,
hummus with pita, crackers, pretzels

Post-game snack/meal (9:30 PM)

See snack and meal ideas above.

References

1. Position of the American Dietetic Association, Dietitians of Canada, and the American College of Sports Medicine: Nutrition and Athletic Performance (2009) Journal of the American Dietetics Association. 109: 509-527.
2. Burke, L. Practical Sports Nutrition (2007) Human Kinetics, Champaign, IL.
3. Dietary Reference Intakes: Retrieved on August 27, 2012 from <http://fnic.nal.usda.gov/dietary-guidance/dietary-reference-intakes/dri-tables>
4. Litt, A. Fuel for Young Athletes (2004) Human Kinetics, Champaign, IL.