

Sport Nutrition for Athletes and Coaches



Fuel for Fun - Healthy Snacks for Active Kids!

Good nutrition is important for everyone, especially young athletes. Offering snacks as a part of sport participation can help:

- Top-up the fuel needed by muscles – before sports and after;
- Reduce hunger;
- Celebrate a game;
- Model food choices that complement healthy exercise and good sportsmanship.

Fuel for Energy

Young athletes should be arriving at the practice or game with enough stored energy to serve them through its duration. Most of this energy comes from nutritious meals and snacks eaten well ahead of time.

Snacks at Breaks

Most children in community sports will not require a snack at half-time. Most will need fluids at this point – water, juices or sport drinks are all useful for rehydration.

Celebration and Recovery

The end of a game or practice is another important time for fluids: water, juices, chocolate milk, soup or sport drinks are great options. Cookies and doughnuts, while sometimes brought to celebrate a game, are poor choices for sport recovery. They also reduce the young athlete's appetite for a healthy meal that should follow sport play. Half-time, and celebration or recovery snack policies should be discussed by coaches and parents at the beginning of the season.

Smart Choices

The best foods for sport snacks will help the young athlete replenish energy, fluids and other nutrients that exercise has depleted. These snacks will also offer essential nutrients that children need to stay healthy, play hard and grow well.



Time of Game or Practice	The Energy Comes From
Early morning	Dinner the previous evening and pre-bedtime snack; small breakfast
Late morning	Early breakfast; mid-morning snack
Afternoon	Lunch
Evening	Lunch; afternoon snack

“Cookies and doughnuts... are poor choices for sport recovery.”

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Snack Quality Chart

EXCELLENT  MODEST  POOR 

Snack	Sport Support	Overall Nutrition	Dental Health	Healthy Environment
Oranges, watermelon, etc.				
Raisins, dried fruit				
Chocolate milk				
Fruit juice (tetra packs or cans)				
Commercial sport drink				
Trail mix				
Peanuts, sunflower seeds, etc., in shell				
Cheese strings				
Popsicles				
Slushies				
Fig/Fruit Newtons				
Sport bars				
Sport gels				
Granola bars				
Home-made whole grain/nut muffins				
Store-bought muffins/scones				
Cream-filled cookies				
Doughnuts				