

BELLA VISTA HIGH SCHOOL

TRACK AND FIELD

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

I. General

What you eat matters! Good eating practices will help your performance. Although your nutritional needs are not markedly different from non-athletes, you do need more calories in order to do more work. Therefore, you should establish and practice sound eating habits. These habits require that you eat three meals a day comprised of the following nutrients essential to your body.

These nutrients are:

Carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals, and water. All of these nutrients exist in a variety of foods. Water, although present in most foods, should be consumed as just plain water.

II. Energy Sources

- A. Carbohydrates: Carbohydrates and fats can be used to supply your active athletic energy needs. Both will supply the calories needed for activity, but carbohydrates are the better fuel for you. Carbohydrates are a readily digestible form of energy and are utilized by the body quickly.

There are two forms of carbohydrates, complex and simple. Nutritionists recommend that 60 percent of the calories in a diet be composed of complex carbohydrate foods. These would include foods such as vegetables, brown rice, whole grain breads, and cereals, beans, dry nuts, and baked or boiled potatoes with skin.

Valuable simple carbohydrates are contained in fresh fruit that are readily digestible and contain vitamins and minerals as well. Oranges, pineapple, grapefruit, apples, apricots, grapes, bananas, pears, strawberries, and cantaloupe are all recommended.

There are simple carbohydrates which are not so nutritious yet are very tempting. Candy bars, cookies, soft drinks, etc., are loaded with calories but are low in nutrients. Resist the temptation to eat many sweets. Furthermore, eating concentrated sugary food 30 to 40 minutes before activity may lead to fatigue just about the time you want to perform.

- B. Fats: Although fat is another energy fuel, it is digested more slowly than carbohydrates and not utilized as quickly. Fat eaten just before competition or a training session can lead to a feeling of fatigue and to poorer performances. It takes 3 to 5 hours to digest a fatty meal, therefore, avoid them completely before athletic activity.

Foods high in fat include: Fried foods such as French fries, fried chicken, and fish, bacon, sausage, tacos, corn and potato chips.

- C. Protein: While athletes need calories from carbohydrates in order to work, they also need protein to build and maintain muscle. Protein foods would include: milk products (select low fat milk), lean meat, fish and poultry (preferably backed to reduce fat content), eggs, nuts, and peanut butter.

If you are eating a variety of the above foods, you are probably getting enough protein in your diet and do not need any protein supplements.

Because it takes a long time and much biochemical work for protein to become muscle, stocking up on protein just before competition will not do you much good and may have an adverse effect. Foods high in protein are usually high in fat and fat should be avoided entirely before athletic activities.

III. Vitamins and Minerals:

A balanced diet supplies all the vitamins and minerals most people need for health and fitness. Therefore, supplements are not required if you are eating a variety of nutritious foods. Complex carbohydrates such as vegetables, and whole-grain cereals and breads contain the B vitamins. Fruits, particularly fresh fruits, have vitamin C. Green peppers, potatoes with skins, lima beans, Brussels sprouts, and broccoli contain both B and C vitamins. Dark green leafy vegetables, pumpkin, squash, carrots, whole grain breads and cereals, beans, cabbage, cantaloupe, and watermelon have useful amounts of vitamins A, K, and E.

If you are eating a balance diet, your mineral needs will most likely be met. However, especially during hot weather training sessions, foods and fluids high in potassium, magnesium and calcium must be consumed. Furthermore, a young growing athlete needs to be careful about iron intake. Iron is needed during rapid growth periods. Foods high in iron are meat, (lean meats and liver), poultry and fish, beans, fruits and vegetables.

IV. Conclusion and Review

You must examine and change if necessary your eating habits toward the end of improving performance. Most importantly, however, the positive change is essential for personal fitness regardless of whether or not you are an athlete.

If you want your eating practices to help you, do the following:

1. Increase the intake and variety of complex carbohydrates. After a hard training session, eat a balanced meal plus additional helpings of complex carbohydrates.
2. Eat more fruit daily.
3. Decrease your intake of sugars and fatty foods. (Bake, roast or broil foods)
4. Increase your fluid intake. (Water, fruit juices, low fat milk)

The training athlete must eat a balanced diet. Do so. You will feel better, get more out of your training, and set the stage for quality performance.

EAT TO COMPETE QUIZ
(Based on information above)

1. Mark each of the following statements True or False.

- _____ Athletes do need more calories than non-athletes.
- _____ Protein-rich foods are the best source of fuel for athletes.
- _____ Athletes need vitamin B12 supplements during strenuous activity.
- _____ Athletes need to drink plenty of fluids during practice and competition.
- _____ Salt tablets should be avoided by athletes.
- _____ Sweets and fat should be avoided prior to activity.
- _____ Water is the best replacement fluid for athletes during and after practice and competition.
- _____ The amount of calories an athlete needs depends on the activity he or she is participating in.
- _____ Gatorade is a good beverage for athletes because it has plenty of sugar and salt.

2. Circle the food items below that are complex carbohydrate foods.

- | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Candy bar | Potato chips | Whole wheat bread | Kidney beans |
| Brown rice | Cottage cheese | Fish | Lima beans |
| Shredded wheat | Steak | Banana | Bagel |

3. Check the foods that are good sources of low fat protein.

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| _____ Low fat milk | _____ Sausage | _____ Whole milk |
| _____ Fried scallops | _____ Non fat milk | _____ Roasted chicken |
| _____ Baked trout | _____ Kidney beans | _____ Asparagus |
| _____ Low fat yogurt | _____ Ground beef | _____ Whole wheat bread |
| _____ Baked potato | _____ Broccoli | _____ Corn chips |

4. Check the foods that are good sources of iron.

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| _____ Apricots | _____ Liver | _____ Olives | _____ Grapefruit |
| _____ Cottage Cheese | _____ Avocados | _____ Raisins | |
| _____ Baked beans | _____ French fries | _____ Lima beans | |

5. Check the beverages an athlete should drink during practice or an event.

_____ Soda (diluted) _____ Tea _____ Gatorade
_____ Wine _____ Water _____ Kool Aid
_____ Grapefruit juice (diluted) _____ Apple juice (diluted) _____ Coffee

6. Select the best pre game meal from these 3 meals:

Meal A	Meal B	Meal C
T-bone steak – 6 oz.	Orange juice – 8 oz.	Sausage – 2 links
Fried egg – 1	Whole wheat toast, 1 slice	Scrambled eggs – 1 egg
Whole wheat toast, 1 slice	Butter – 1 pat	Cheddar cheese – 2 oz.
Butter – 1 pat	Banana – 1	Whole wheat toast, 1 slice
Whole milk – 8 oz.	Tea – 8 oz.	Butter – 1 pat
		Coffee – 8 oz.

7. Identify which of these are myths by marking True or False.

_____ All athletes should eat the same amount of food.

_____ The more you exercise the more protein you need.

_____ Sugar in the form of candy or honey will give you quick energy if taken just before competition.

_____ Drinking water during exercise or competition can lead to stomach cramps.

_____ Use of the glycogen loading diet will improve anyone's athletic performance.