

TEEN NUTRITION BLUEPRINT

saved by the bell

Eating right is your foundation for an exciting future as an athlete. But that said, it's not only what you eat but, just as importantly, when you eat.

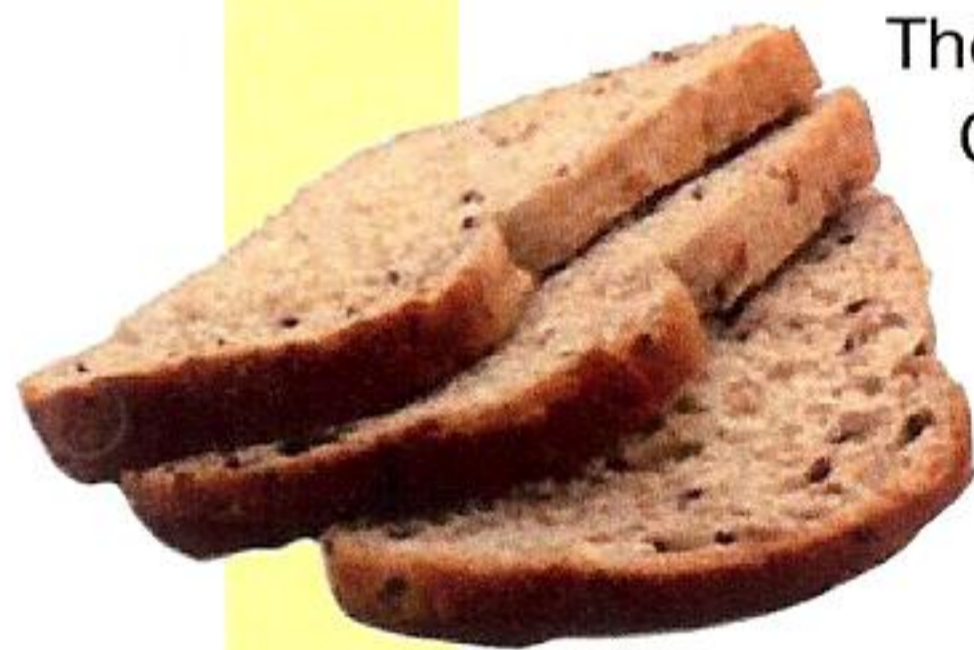
Eat on a Schedule

Besides helping you prevent falling victim to either overeating or under-snacking, eating on the clock is a physically wise option and removes much of the guesswork. You should be eating a meal or snack every 2 1/2 to 3 hours, all day long.

Blood Sugar – The Key to ‘Sweet’ Victory

Blood sugar, or glucose, is what your brain burns for power. Your brain cannot store glucose so it must be provided from food sources and delivered via blood flow. That is why if you have not eaten for long stretches of time you may begin to feel foggy-headed or have a hard time concentrating. With a shortage of glucose you can even experience mood swings, exhaustion and, when allowed to become a continuous problem, you can develop serious and life-threatening diseases. The trick is getting the right balance. Too little glucose will make you sick, but too much will flood your body and be just as bad.

The Slow Burn



The main food source for creating glucose is carbohydrates. Complex carbohydrates take longer to enter the blood stream because of their often “complex” structure or added fiber. The crunchy texture of raw vegetables and protective coatings on long grain and brown rices for example, make their digestion a slower process and give you a longer, more steady supply of glucose. Simple carbohydrates, with their essential “pure sugar” makeup, rush glucose into the blood stream, only to be used up and leave you burned out more quickly.

Don't Go on Overload

When your blood sugar is stable, you burn fat, feel good, think clearly, have energy and maintain better control over your hunger. Since you cannot simply eat all the complex carbs you need in a single sitting on any given day without overloading your body with glucose, spacing out your meals and allowances of carbs becomes the trick that will keep your fire burning hot and steady all day long.

Make healthy choices

Complex Carbs

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Whole-grain breads and pasta
- Long-grain or brown rice
- These foods break down into glucose at a slower rate, providing a longer-lasting energy source.
- Avoid overloading on complex carbs by spacing out your meals through the day.

Simple Carbs

- Fruit juice
- White bread
- Candy and other sweets
- White rice
- These foods turn into glucose rapidly, giving you a quick burst of energy that can just as quickly come crashing down.

The Low-Carb Craze

- Low-carb and no-carb diets may be trendy, but following these plans deprives your body of important fuel, especially when you're trying to improve your game.