

TEEN NUTRITION BLUEPRINT

bus basics

Today, my friends, is GAME DAY! Your after-school snack will now most likely become your pre-game meal and must be "spot on" in order to give you the competitive edge when the action starts.

Stay Consistent

While yes, the choice you make for this one meal can have a huge impact on your ability to perform just hours later, it's just as important to look at the contribution the last few days' worth of eating can have on the game you'll play today. Consistently good eating habits provide your muscles with several days' worth of glycogen-building nutrients.

7 Sacred Principles of Pep

Okay, these pre-game snack tips may not be sacred, but now that I have your attention, let's roll with it. They are:

- 1 Start with starch** – Starch is easy to digest and helps to keep blood sugar levels steady.
- 2 Trim the fat** – Fats and oils slow down digestion and can leave you feeling too full and bloated at game time. What makes this worse is that your digestion is usually already slowed down due to your emotionally keyed-up state.
- 3 Shut out the sweets** – Sweets and simple sugars can cause too quick of a blood sugar elevation, leaving you only to crash from your high later on...unfortunately most likely in crunch time!
- 4 Cut the caffeine** – Many athletes reach for caffeine as a pre-game boost, but this perceived energy jolt is often short term and can quickly leave you dehydrated.
- 5 Add water** – Never consume a pre-game meal (or any meal for that matter) without having a glass of water with it as well. It helps to aid the digestion and leaves you less likely to get stomach cramps later.
- 6 Digest the rest** – Try not to eat immediately before competition. It's better to leave at least 60 to 90 minutes between your snack time and your attack time, if you know what I mean!

- 7 Win** – That's what you're doing steps 1 to 6 for, right? Then go get that "W"!

Make
healthy
choices

The Right Pre-Game Snack Will:

- Stabilize the blood sugar levels you've maintained up to that point in the day (with your timed eating), preventing any roller coaster-like peaks or dips in your energy levels during the game.
- Provide some immediate usable energy from the circulating blood sugar it creates.
- Help you to avoid in-game hunger that is strong enough to distract you from the task at hand.

Five for Fueling!

These snacks meet the criteria, plus they're portable on the bus.

- Banana and a bag of pretzels w/ bottled water
- Soup and crackers (in a Thermos) w/ bottled water
- Turkey sandwich on whole wheat w/ bottled water
- Breadsticks (3) and a yogurt w/ bottled water
- Low protein (low sugar) energy bar w/ bottled water

