

Sports Nutrition for Teens

Adolescent athletes have different energy and hydration requirements than adults. This flyer aims to provide some guidance for parents and coaches to ensure energy and hydration needs are met, and normal growth and development milestones are not compromised.

Remember that teenagers:

-  Use more energy per kilogram than adults
-  Are more reliant on fats and less reliant on carbohydrates
-  Have decreased lactate levels
-  Have a harder time with thermoregulation
-  May need more exogenous carbohydrates during sports than an adult
-  Need adequate energy intake for sports as well as for growth and development
-  May need regular snacks plus larger meals depending on schedule

Fuelling for sport

- Small carbohydrate snack (10-20 grams of CHO) pre-training may lead to better performance
- Recovery eating within an hour of finishing training is vital for glycogen replacement
- Meals/snacks post-training should consist of a 3:1 or 4:1 ratio of carbohydrate:protein

Protein and fats

- Requirements range from 1.3-1.8g/kg/day
- Fat intake should contribute 20-35% of overall energy intake

Typical carbohydrate intake for youth (teenagers fall under adult guidelines post puberty)



3-5.5g/kg/day
for girls



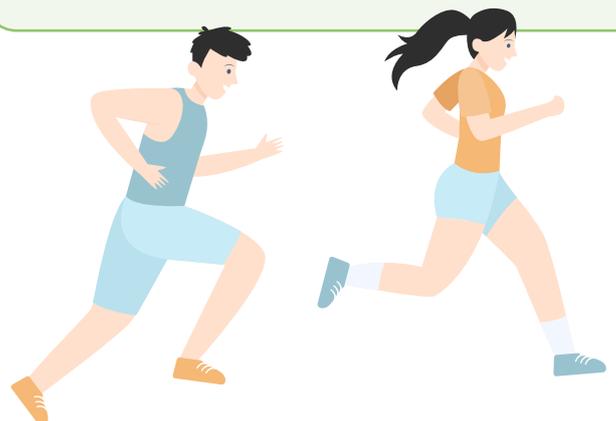
6-9g/kg/day
for boys

Hydration and youth

Many teenagers arrive in a hypo-hydrated state for sports, and it is important to be aware of dehydration as their core temperature rises faster than that of adults.

Tips to keep your teen athlete hydrated:

-  Drinking fluids with flavour will increase voluntary intake by up to 50%
-  Youth are more prone to heat illness and issues with temperature regulation
-  Aim to arrive well hydrated for sport
-  Allow frequent breaks to consume fluids
-  Weigh an athlete pre- and post-training to check losses (500g loss = 500ml of fluid loss)
-  Keep fluid losses below 2% loss of body weight



Supplementing teens

(common nutritional deficiencies to watch for)



Iron

Red meats, seafoods, beans, chicken, apricots, beef and chicken liver



Calcium

Dairy products, sesame seeds, dark green vegetables



Vitamin D

Cod liver oil, fatty fish, salmon, tuna, mackerel, egg yolks, yoghurt



Iodine

Seaweed, fish, dairy, eggs, iodised salt



Zinc

Oysters, pepitas, sunflower seeds, red meat



Magnesium

Wholegrains, dark green vegetables, dark chocolate, nuts



Omega-3 (EPA & DHA)

Fatty fish, plant oils, algae



B12

Organ meats, shellfish, meat, eggs, dairy products

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