Daily Performance Nutrition for Young Soccer Athletes

The Basics

Soccer is a sport that requires both power and endurance. During training periods, an athlete's daily food intake influences their ability to build muscle, sustain energy, and recover quickly. In order to perform at maximum capacity, an athlete needs the proper balance of carbohydrate, protein, fat, vitamins, minerals and fluids.

Food can be broken down into 3 macronutrients: carbohydrates, protein and fat. Training athletes should balance their daily calories by these percentages:

50-60% Carbohydrates
15-20% Protein
20-30% Fat

Power Sources

When training, athletes need to increase their daily calorie intake. Energy and endurance come from an athlete's ability to store and utilize food in the form of dietary carbohydrates, fats and proteins.

Carbohydrates and fats are the primary suppliers of the energy.

Protein is spared from being used for energy so that it can focus on growth, repair and maintenance of muscle.

Daily Training Need

Weight(lbs)	Carbs(grams)	Protein(grams)
60	138 - 192	48 - 54
70	161 – 224	56 - 63
80	184 - 256	64 - 72
90	207 - 288	72 - 81
100	230 - 320	80 - 90
110	253 - 352	88 - 99
120	276 - 384	96 - 108
130	299 - 416	104 - 117
140	322 - 448	112 - 126
150	345 - 480	120 – 135

Example Food Choice Carbs	(grams)	Food Choice Protein	(grams)
1 slice whole wheat bread	13	¼ lb beef burger	27
1 med plain bagel	30	3 oz beef steak	26
½ cup granola	32	3oz chicken breast	25
2 cups pasta	80	½ can tuna	16
1 medium banana	28	2 tbsp peanut butter	7
¼ cup raisins	33	1 cup low fat milk	8
1 medium orange	15	1 cup lowfat fruit yogurt	7
1 cup low fat milk	12		
1 cup lowfat fruit yogurt	32		

References
American Dietetic Association. (2006). *Sports Nutrition A Practice Manual for Professionals 4th ed.* U.S.A: Library of Congress Catalog in-in-Publication Data.
Ryan, Monique. (2005). *Performance Nutrition for Team Sports.* Boulder Colorado: Peak Sports Press.

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SOCCER DIET – Pre/Post Game Meals

Introduction: Soccer players are continuously looking for ways to improve his or her performance, increasing the body's maximum potential and forcing it to achieve championship form. Training leading up to a tournament is done with hard work and commitment on a daily basis. With the amount of effort and time spent in training comes and equally high energy consumption and that is where nutrition (fuel) will come in.

High energy can be obtained through a diet which is rich in carbohydrates. Carbohydrates are the main fuel and energy source of the body and the soccer player needs loads of them. It is equally important to consume the proper carbohydrates as outlined below. Protein is also very important to the soccer player diet as they help with recovery and muscle growth. Fats are important and essential to a healthy diet as long as they are consumed appropriately. A general rule is to consume 60% carbohydrates, 25% protein, and 15%fat in your diet. Fluid is very important and should be consumed before, during, and after every soccer event.

Pre- Game Meal: The pre- game meal should be consumed 3-4 hours prior to a soccer game. Plenty of water/Gatorade should be available at the meal. The meal should be planned around individual likes and dislikes, thus a variety is essential. Carbohydrates with a low Glycemic Index (GI) should be consumed before the game to preserve energy stores and provide long lasting energy throughout the game. High GI foods should be consumed immediately before and during the game to provide for lost energy in during the first half of games. A list is provided below.

In-Game Nutrition: Players should be provided with easily digested foods during the game and at half time. These include crackers, grapes, oranges, watermelon, rice crispy bars, trail mix, etc... Gatorade should be available at all games. Each player should drink 10-12 oz. 30 minutes prior to the game, 8-10 oz. of water before kick-off, and 10 ounces of Gatorade at half time. Water should be available to all players at anytime prior to, during, and after games. Light colored Gatorade (Tiger, Rain, etc.) instead of darker colors should be available for players as it is easier to digest.

Post- Game Snack: Immediately following the game (within 30 min.), Gatorade/water should be available to players after games. Light snacks should be provided if there is a game the next day or later in the day. This should include high carbohydrate and protein foods. Trail mix, rice crispy bars, watermelon, other fruits, crackers, and vegetables. The post game snack should be provided immediately as this is when the player's glycogen stores are wide open and able to consume the most for the next match. One to two hours after this event lessens and the player is not able to consume as much food. The post game meal should contain a good balance of carbohydrate, protein, and fat. Calories are important and should be consumed at the rate of 2500/3000 per day. Older teams can consume more; younger teams may consume less depending on the weight of the individual.

LOW GI FOODS
Spaghetti
Pasta and Rice
Oatmeal and low sugar cereals
Popcorn
Oranges/Grapes, Pears, Apples, Pineapple
Wheat Tortilla
Sweetened yogurt
Fat Free milk
Green Beans, Broccoli, Cauliflower
Nuts/Peanuts
Grapefruit
Dried Fruit
Avocado
Green peas
All Bran and Banana Bread

MED/HIGH GI FOODS
Graham Crackers
Peanut butter crackers
Trail Mix and Pretzels
Honey
Watermelon, Dates, Raisins
Baked potatoes/Mash Potatoes
Rice Cakes
Cheerios
Waffles/pancakes
Bagels/muffins
Bread/Pita Bread
Cream of wheat
Fruit roll ups
Cheese pizza
Bananas

Foods to Avoid or Minimize
Burgers, soda, butter, margarine, mayonnaise, nuts, seeds, salad dressings, cream cheese, fried foods, junk food, candy, large portions of meat, heavy sauces, gravies. We also recommend no energy drinks or anything with caffeine.