

# GETTING SET

## THE DAY BEFORE THE GAME

The day before a big sporting event requires extra effort to ensure adequate carbohydrate is eaten and fluid intake has been sufficient to ensure a good state of hydration. The focus for meals and snacks over the day should be 'fuel foods' and fluids, with less intake of high fat foods during the period of exercise.

### *Ideas for meals to have the night before*

- Pasta - With a tomato based sauce, vegetables and protein such as chicken or lean beef.
- Homemade Pizza's - Whole meal bases, with either ham or chicken, spinach and cheese
- Stir Fry – Lean pork or chicken with plenty of vegetables with rice noodles and fresh lemon and a little soy sauce for taste.
- Minestrone Soup – tomato based soup with lots of vegetables, beans and rice.



# AFTER THE GAME

Recovery after each day's game or training session is essential to maintain your child's fuel stores, and therefore perform at their best. This is particularly true when they are required to play over consecutive days at a tournament.

Combinations of foods that provide valuable amounts of carbohydrates and protein include yoghurt with fruit, smoothies, cheese sandwich or cheese on toast with a glass of milk or fruit and grain bars. If you have a long drive home after games make sure you pack healthy recovery snacks as it can be difficult to find appropriate options in transit.

### *Recovery snacks and fluids should be:*

- Started within 30 – 60 minutes of finishing exercise
- High in Carbohydrate with a little protein
- Quick and easy to prepare and eat
- Available at the venue if it does take a long time to get home

### *Ideas for recovery Snacks*

- Yoghurt and a handful of dried fruit and nuts
- Sushi
- Sandwich, wrap or roll with either chicken, tuna, cheese or egg and salad.
- Chicken and pasta salad
- Fluids: water or milk

# FUELLING FOR BASKETBALL



Parents and Coaches frequently ask “what are the best foods and drinks for kids to have to boost their basketball performance?” Whilst the nutrition needs of children are individual and vary throughout their development, there are some important guidelines that are applicable to all junior basketball players.

The foods and fluids consumed by basketball players of any age can have an impact on their ability to train, play and recover well. Food provides fuel to exercising muscles and nutrients for growth, recovery, cognition (ability to think well) and the immune system. It makes sense then that choosing foods and fluids that provide the optimal amounts of nutrients, can help ensure a fit, strong and healthy young athlete.

### **Carbohydrates and Protein**

Carbohydrates such as cereal products, pasta, rice, fruit, starchy vegetables and calcium rich dairy foods. These rich energy foods need to be eaten at frequent intervals each day as they provide much of the fuel needed for kids to be active and happy. Carbohydrates keep blood sugar levels consistent, helping concentration during the day. An increased intake around training times and game days can help maximize the muscles uptake of this fuel.

Protein is important for growth and muscle repair during and especially after exercise. These Growth foods include meat, seafood, eggs, dairy, legumes, nuts and seeds.

## ON GAME DAY

### **Pre-game meal ideas / Breakfast**

- Porridge with apple and cinnamon
- Toast with avocado, tomato and feta
- Scrambled eggs with cheese and tomato on toast
- Pancakes or granola with fresh berries and yoghurt
- Peanut butter on toast with sliced banana
- Wheat Bix with honey and banana
- Fruit smoothie with milk
- Fluids: water, milk or 100% orange juice

### **Ideas for snacks & energy boosters**

- Fresh fruit
- Sandwich with cheese, natural peanut butter or honey
- Vegetable sticks with hummus or avocado dip
- Yoghurt
- Homemade oat and banana pancakes
- Trail mix with nuts, seeds and dried fruit
- Rice crackers with peanut butter

### **Lunch**

- Multi grain or whole meal sandwich with turkey, chicken or ham and salad
- Fresh sushi
- Chicken and pasta salad



## FLUIDS

Managing fluid intake is just as important as food intake for the health and performance of junior basketball players. Children can overheat and dehydrate quickly as they are not able to regulate their body temperature as well as adults.

Before It is important that children start drinking well before a game or training, by sipping mouthfuls often throughout the day. During games players should be encouraged to drink fluid with meals and snacks, this takes advantage of the electrolytes in food to ensure the water is better retained by the body. After a game encourage rest and to have a larger drink, followed by fluid intake as desired during the hours post exercise. Suitable fluids for recovery include water and milk.

Discourage junior athletes from having carbonated drinks (including soft drinks) before, during and immediately after exercise as they can upset the stomach and reduce their desire to drink. It is also not suitable for active children to be drinking cola, coffee, tea and “energy drinks” as these contain large amounts of caffeine.

