



Nutrition Information & Tactics to Fuel Performance





Table of Contents

Eating to Fuel Performance

Calories & Macronutrients

Food Lists

Hydration

Travel Considerations

Family Involvement

Recipe & Meal Prep Resources

Prepared by Ann Chisholm
ann@fettleandfood.com



**TROPOS
FITNESS CLUB**

Fettle
+ FOOD

Eating to Fuel Performance

To play soccer at this level, you need more than just skill and practice—you need the right fuel to perform at your best. What you eat and drink before, during, and after games can make a huge difference in your energy, focus, and recovery. This guide is built to help you understand how to fuel your body for top performance.

Before the Game: Build Your Energy

Think of your body as a car—you must fill your tank with the proper fuel before hitting the road. The right pre-game meal will give you lasting energy and keep you focused on the field.

What to Eat (2-4 Hours Before the Game):

Before a game or training, you want to focus on a balanced meal that includes protein, carbohydrates and a small amount of dietary fats (more on this and examples in the next section).

During the Game: Stay Fuelled and Hydrated

During an intense soccer match, your body burns through energy quickly. To maintain peak performance, it's essential to stay hydrated and, if needed, refuel with quick, easy-to-digest food.

Tips for Game Day Fuel:

- Hydrate: Drink water before the game starts and at halftime. Aim for small sips to avoid feeling too full.
- Quick Snacks: If the game is long or intense, refuel with a small snack like a banana, orange slices, an energy bar or a sports drink mix like gatorade.

After the Game: Refuel and Recover

Post-game nutrition is just as important as pre-game. After a tough match, your body needs to replenish energy and repair muscles.

What to Eat (Within 30-60 Minutes After the Game)

- Carbohydrates to refill energy stores: Whole grain bread, pasta, rice, or fruits.
- Protein to repair muscles: Lean meats, eggs, dairy, or plant-based proteins.
- Hydration: Replenish fluids with water or a sports drink if you've sweated a lot.

Fuel your body right, and you'll have the energy, focus, and strength to play your best on the field!



Calories & Macronutrients

As a youth athlete, your body needs the right fuel to perform at its best both on and off the field. This fuel comes from the food you eat. Let's break down the basics of calories and macronutrients to help you understand how to power your body like a pro.

Calories

Calories are units of energy that your body uses to function. Everything from running, jumping, and training to basic activities like breathing and thinking requires energy. The food you eat provides this energy, and your body burns it to keep you moving.

Why Do Calories Matter?

Calories are essential for performance, recovery, and growth. As a young athlete, your body is still developing, which means you need enough calories to support your training and your overall health.

Too Few vs. Too Many Calories

Eating too few calories can leave you feeling tired, sluggish, and unable to perform your best. On the other hand, eating too many calories without enough activity can lead to weight gain and reduced performance. It's all about balance!

Macronutrients

Macronutrients, or "macros," are the nutrients that provide your body with energy. There are three main macronutrients: carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. Each one plays a unique role in helping you perform, recover, and grow.

- Carbohydrates: Carbohydrates are your body's primary source of energy. Think of them as the fuel that powers your workouts and games. Carbs help you maintain energy levels, especially during intense practices or games. They also help your body recover after exercise.
- Protein: Protein is essential for building and repairing muscles. It also helps your body grow and supports your immune system. After a hard workout or game, your muscles need protein to repair and get stronger.
- Fats: Fats provide a long-lasting source of energy and help your body absorb essential vitamins. Healthy fats support brain function, hormone production, and overall energy levels.



Food Lists

| Protein | Carbohydrates | Fat |
|--|---|--|
| Chicken Turkey Beef Pork Eggs & Egg Whites Fish & Seafood (e.g. salmon, tuna, white fish) Greek Yogurt Cottage Cheese Protein Powder Tofu | Rice Pasta Oatmeal Potatoes Quinoa Bread, Bagels, English Muffins Beans & Legumes Fruits & Vegetables | Nuts & Nut Butters Seeds Coconut Milk Oils (olive oil, avocado oil, etc.) Avocado Butter Eggs + fatty cuts of meat will often have more calories from fat than protein |

Finding the Right Balance

For youth athletes, it's important to get the right balance of macronutrients:

- Carbs: About 45-65% of your total daily calories
- Protein: About 10-30% of your total daily calories
- Fats: About 20-35% of your total daily calories

This balance can change based on your sport, training intensity, and goals.

Remember, food is fuel! Eating the right balance of calories and macronutrients will help you perform better, recover faster, and grow stronger.



Hydration

Staying hydrated is one of the most important ways to ensure peak performance on the soccer field. Proper hydration helps maintain energy levels, focus, and overall endurance.

Soccer is a fast-paced, endurance sport that requires quick bursts of energy, focus, and agility. Your body loses fluids through sweat, and even a slight loss of hydration can impact your performance. Staying hydrated helps:

- Maintain energy levels
- Regulate body temperature
- Improve focus and decision-making
- Prevent cramps and fatigue
- Speed up recovery

Signs of Dehydration

Dehydration can happen faster than you think, especially during intense practices or games. Here are some signs to watch for:

- Feeling thirsty
- Dry mouth
- Fatigue or sluggishness
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Muscle cramps
- Dark yellow urine

If you notice any of these signs, it's important to hydrate immediately to avoid further complications.



Hydration

Before the Game or Practice

- Start Hydrated: Drink water throughout the day before your game or practice.
- Pre-Hydration: Aim to drink 16-20 ounces of water about 2-3 hours before playing.
- Top-Up: Drink another 8-10 ounces of water about 20 minutes before hitting the field.

During the Game or Practice

- Drink at Every Break: Make it a habit to drink water during halftime and breaks.
- Use Electrolytes: Consider using a sports drink to replenish electrolytes lost through sweat for longer games or intense training sessions.

After the Game or Practice

- Rehydrate: Drink water or a recovery drink within 30 minutes after playing.
- Check Your Urine: A quick way to check your hydration status is by looking at the colour of your urine. Pale yellow means you're hydrated, while dark yellow means you need more fluids.

What to Drink

- Water: The best option for hydration before, during, and after practices/games.
- Sports Drinks: Use these during long or intense sessions to replace lost electrolytes.
- Avoid sugary drinks like soda, energy drinks, and juice.

How Much Water Should You Drink?

- Before Play: 16-20 oz (2-3 hours before)
- During Play: 4-8 oz every 15-20 minutes (if possible)
- After Play: 16-24 oz

Final Tips

- Carry a Water Bottle: Always have your water bottle during practices and games (and even school/day-to-day life).
- Make Hydration a Habit: Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink water.
- Listen to Your Body: If you feel tired, sluggish, or cramping up, it could be a sign that you need more fluids.

Staying hydrated is a simple but powerful way to keep your body performing at its best. Make it a priority, and you'll notice the difference on the field!



Travel Considerations

Travelling for games and tournaments is part of playing soccer at this level. While on the road, keeping your nutrition on track can be challenging, but with some planning, you can fuel your body properly to perform at your best.

Pre-Trip Preparation

Before you hit the road, plan your meals and snacks. This will help you avoid unhealthy convenience foods and ensure you stay fuelled. Success with travel comes down to planning.

Pack Healthy Snacks

Bringing your snacks is one of the easiest ways to stay on track. Here are some ideas:

- Fruits: apples, bananas, oranges, or berries
- Veggies and hummus
- Trail mix (nuts and dried fruit)
- Sandwich
- Protein bars
- Cheese and crackers
- Pretzels
- Pasta salad with veggies and protein

Avoid These Common Pitfalls

- Skipping Meals: It's tempting to skip meals when travelling, but this can leave you low on energy.
- Relying on Fast Food: Fast food is convenient but often high in unhealthy fats and sugars. Choose healthier options whenever possible.
- Dehydration: Travel can make it easy to forget about hydration. Keep a water bottle with you at all times.
- Eating different foods your body is not used to. Game day is when we want to perform at a 10/10. Stick to foods you know that work for your system.

Final Travel Nutrition Tips

- Plan Ahead: Know where you'll be stopping for meals. Plan and pack ahead of time.
- Stay Consistent: Stick to your usual eating patterns as much as possible.
- Listen to Your Body: Eat when hungry and make balanced choices to keep your energy up.



Family Involvement

Parents and guardians play a crucial role in shaping the nutrition habits of youth athletes. As the primary decision-makers for meals and snacks, parents can significantly influence how their young athletes fuel their bodies for performance and recovery.

Creating a supportive home environment is essential to instilling healthy eating habits that benefit youth athletes on and off the field.

One of the best ways parents can support their youth athletes is by planning balanced meals that include a variety of whole foods, such as lean proteins, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats. Involving children in meal planning and preparation can also help them understand the importance of nutrition and encourage them to make healthier choices.

Additionally, parents should ensure that healthy snacks are readily available for busy schedules, particularly on game days and during travel.

Healthy eating should be a family-wide focus, not just for the athlete. When the family adopts nutritious eating habits, it creates a positive environment and reinforces healthy behaviours. Parents can lead by example by making mindful food choices, staying hydrated, and avoiding overly processed or sugary foods.

Remember, youth athletes will model the behaviours they see. By prioritizing nutritious meals and snacks for the entire family, parents can help their athletes build lifelong healthy eating habits that support their sports performance and overall well-being.



Meal Prep & Recipe Resources

Eat the Gains: <https://eatthegains.com/>

Real Food Dietitian's: <https://therealfooddietitians.com/>

Sweet Pea & Saffron: <https://sweetpeasandsaffron.com/>

Chocolate Covered Katie: <https://chocolatecoveredkatie.com/>

Love & Lemons: <https://www.loveandlemons.com/>

The Big Man's World: <https://thebigmansworld.com/>

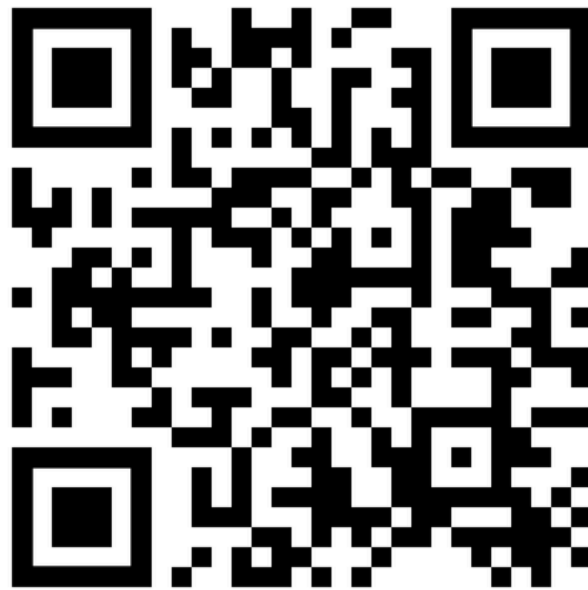
The Clean Eating Couple: <https://thecleaneatingcouple.com/>

The Protein Chef: <https://theproteinchef.co/>



**Planning and information can take you far,
but coaching will get you there faster.
Book a complimentary strategy session.**

Pacific FC players and family members enjoy 20% off
Fettle + Food coaching packages.



Fettle
+ FOOD



**TROPOS
FITNESS CLUB**