



Special Olympics

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Nutrition Guide





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Nutrition Guide

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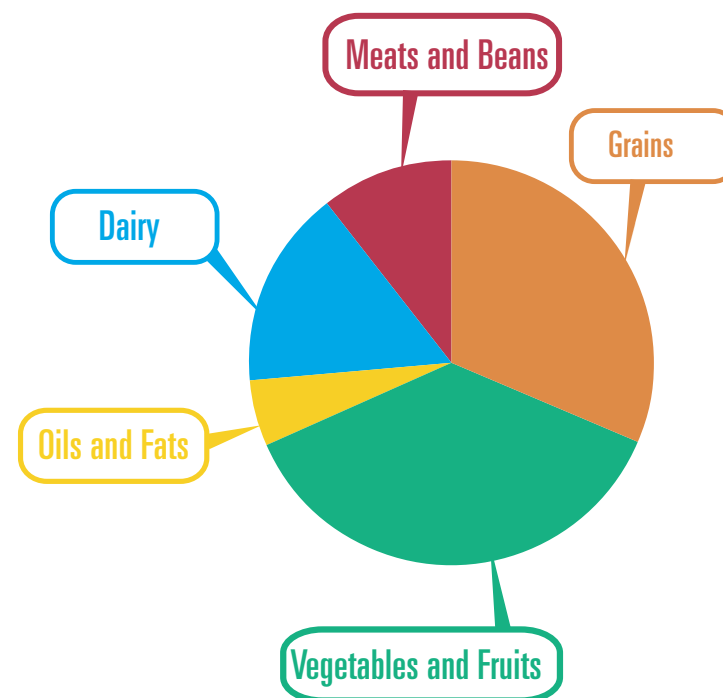
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Nutrition Overview

Nutrition is important to your everyday health. The food you eat gives you energy to learn at school, work at your job, and perform your best in sports. Eating a balanced and healthy diet will allow you to be active in your daily life and keep you from getting sick.

• Know your food groups

All the foods that you eat fit into a food group. Each group helps your body with different things, so it is important that you eat foods from each group every day!



- **Grains** give your body the energy it needs each day.
- **Vegetables** have nutrients that keep you healthy.
- **Fruits** help your body stay healthy and aid in healing.
- **Oils and fats**, in small amounts, are needed to help your body to work properly.
- **Dairy** keeps your bones and teeth strong.
- **Meats and Beans** make your muscles and body strong.

• Eat a variety of foods



Grains

- Instead of only eating white bread, white rice, and regular pasta, try to get half your grains each day from whole grains.
- Whole grains are usually brown in color and have more vitamins.

Meats and Beans

- Try to eat meat, fish, eggs, or beans at every meal.
- Choose less fattening meat like turkey, chicken, seafood, and sirloin steak.

Vegetables

- Try to eat different vegetables each day.
- Eat a variety of colors!
 - Red- Peppers, Orange- Carrots, Yellow- Corn, Green- Broccoli, and Purple- Eggplant.

Fruits

- Eating fruit as a snack or dessert is a great way to add it to your diet!
- Choose different kinds of fruits such as fresh, dried, frozen, or canned.

Oils and Fats

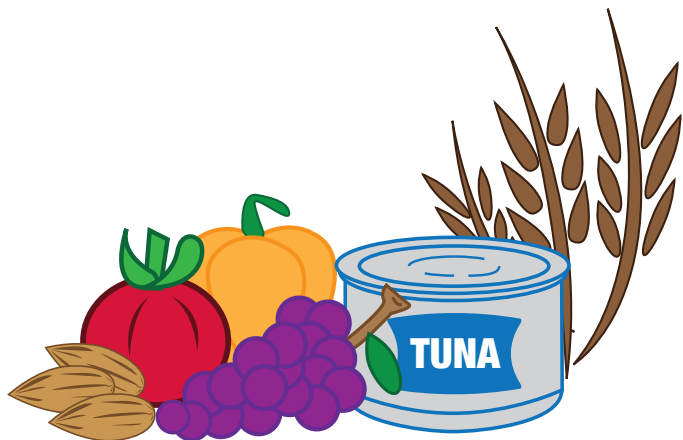
- Fish, avocados, and nuts are a great way to get healthy oils and fats in your diet.
- Eating and cooking with vegetable oil and olive oil are better for your body.

Dairy

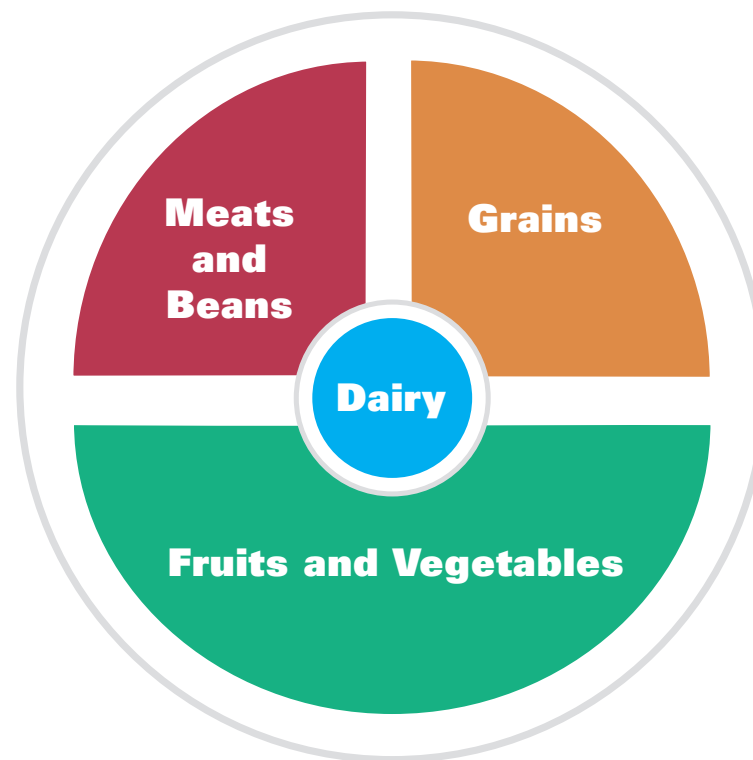
- Try to include one serving of dairy in each meal daily to get enough calcium.
 - Try drinking milk at dinner or putting low fat cheese on your sandwich.
- Choose dairy sources that are low fat or fat free.
 - Try skim milk, low fat cheese, or fat free yogurt.

• Keep your plate balanced

- It is important to try to get at least three different food groups in each meal. Eating different foods allows your body to receive all the vitamins and nutrients it needs. If you eat the same thing every day, you may be missing out on some of these nutrients.
- A good guide to use when you are eating is dividing your plate into three sections. Fruits and vegetables should take up most of your plate.
- Dairy is shown as a circle in the middle of your plate to remind you it can be added to other food groups in your meal.
 - Add dairy by drinking milk as your beverage, or adding low fat cheese to your grains.
- Add healthy oils and fats by using olive oil as your salad dressing.
 - Remember that fish, nuts, and avocados already contain healthy oils and fat!
- Remember to have fun! Try new meals and mix up what you eat each day. This will turn cooking and eating into an adventure!



• Example of a balanced plate



*Oils are only needed in small amounts and are often added during cooking.

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Why is Nutrition Important for Athletes?

Athletes are very active people who spend a lot of time practicing and competing in sporting events. To be able to stay active it is important to keep your energy up. Food is what gives your body the energy to walk, run, and play sports. It also keeps you focused while you are doing an event, whether basketball, track, or soccer. Practicing good nutrition can help you improve in your sport!

There are three main nutrients in food that keep your body functioning every day!

Carbohydrates fuel your muscles and allow them to work for longer periods of time without getting tired. Carbohydrates are in whole grains, fruits, and vegetables so eat them every day.



Proteins build and repair muscles. Protein along with exercise can improve your muscle strength. If you hurt your muscles, protein can also heal them. Good ways to get protein in your diet are eggs, meat, fish, and beans.



Fats, when consumed in small amounts, help your body work properly and provide cushion for your body! They also make food tasty. Most people get too much fat, so try to focus on being healthy and eating just a little. Fats are found in butter, salad dressing, mayonnaise, and desserts.



There are also many different **vitamins** and **minerals** that help your body function. Eat a variety of foods from each food group to get all the vitamins and minerals you need each day.

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Nutrition and Exercise

Eating well on a regular basis will keep your body healthy and in top shape for participating in sports. To fuel your body for each workout you should focus on what you are eating at three specific times:

- Before Exercising
- While Exercising
- After Exercising

Focusing on what you eat at these times will build up the energy you need to perform the workout, keep that energy while you are working out, and help your body recover from your workout.

One of the most important things to remember when you are trying to decide what to eat at any of these times is to **eat foods that are familiar to you!**

Some people get nervous before big events or have a hard time eating early in the morning. Some foods may cause an upset stomach which can take away from performance on the field, court, or track. Just like you practice your sport before you go to an event or game, make sure you practice your eating habits too. Have a plan and stick with it so that you can avoid feeling sick!

1. Nutrition before an event

- ***Day before the event***

- The night before: it is important to get a good dinner to start building your energy. Focus on eating grains, lean meats, fruits, and vegetables to get plenty of carbohydrates! Make sure you also drink water so you are ready for the next day.

- ***Day of the event***

- 3 or 4 hours before the event: You should eat a well balanced meal of familiar foods and drink water with the meal. Avoid foods high in fat such as cheeseburgers and fries because these can take a long time to digest and make you feel tired.

- > If you have an event or practice early in the morning you may not have time to eat a full meal beforehand. If this is the case, it is very important to eat a good meal the night before. The morning of the event, eat a small meal or snack an hour before it begins.

- 1 hour before the event: Eat a small snack (like a cereal bar or piece of fruit) and drink water to keep you focused while you are exercising!

2. Nutrition during the event

• Food

- Events or practices shorter than 60 minutes: It is not necessary to eat to maintain your energy.
- Events or practices longer than 60 minutes: You may need to eat a little bit to make sure you have energy.
 - > Some foods that can give you a boost of energy while you are working out are fruits and fruit juices, granola and cereal bars, and sports drinks. Eat only small amounts at a time though to avoid feeling full or sick.
 - > Remember that if you plan to eat something during your event to make sure you do it during practice too!

• Water

- Every 15 minutes- Try and take a break every 15 minutes while exercising to drink water.
- Events or practices longer than 60 minutes- You may want to try drinking a sports drink to keep your energy up during workouts lasting longer than an hour.
 - > If you plan on drinking sports drinks during games or events make sure you also drink them during practices lasting longer than an hour.



3. Nutrition after an event

• Snack

- 15- 30 minutes after: Eat a small snack to begin to regain your energy! This will also help repair any damage done to your muscle; you will not be as sore the next day!
 - > It is sometimes hard to want to eat something right after you exercise because you are hot and sweaty. There are many options to choose from, so try out a few different snacks after practices. This way you will know which snacks work best for you!

- Applesauce	- Chocolate milk	- Graham crackers
- 100% Fruit Juice	- Soy milk	- Low-fat cheese and crackers
- Banana	-Fig cookies	- Peanut butter crackers
- Cereal bar	-Fruit yogurt	- Trail mix
-Cottage cheese and fruit	- Sports drink	- Whole grain bagel

• Meal

- One to two hours after: Eat a full meal. Give your body back all the energy it lost by eating a balanced meal filled with carbohydrates, protein, and fat.



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Sample Menu

• Night before an event

Dinner:

- Whole grain pasta
- Tomato sauce with lean ground beef or turkey
- Salad greens with vegetables
- Olive oil or fat free dressing
- Bread stick- lightly buttered
 - Low-fat or skim milk
 - Water

Snack:

- Frozen yogurt topped with blueberries
- Water

• Day of Event

Event Time:
Morning (9:00 AM)

Breakfast:

(Eat 1-2 hours before event)

- ½ of a Bagel with peanut butter
 - Fruit salad
 - Water

Event:

- Water every 15 minutes
- A sports drink , cereal bar (if needed)

After Snack

(Eat 15-30 minutes after event)

- Trail mix
- Sports drink

Lunch:

(Eat 1-2 hours after event)

- Sandwich
 - Turkey
 - Low-fat American cheese
 - Whole wheat bread
 - Lettuce
 - Tomato
- Low-fat mayonnaise
- Low-fat yogurt
- Strawberries
- Water

Dinner:

- Grilled chicken
- Wild Rice
- Broccoli
- Canned fruit mix
- Low-fat or skim milk
- Soft serve ice cream



• Non-Event Day

Breakfast

- Blueberry pancakes with light syrup
 - Turkey sausage
 - Cantaloupe
- Low-fat or skim milk

Lunch

- Beef vegetable soup
- Whole grain crackers
- Green peppers, carrots, and cherry tomatoes dipped in fat free dressing
 - Water

Snack

- Celery with peanut butter
- Low-fat milk

Dinner

- Salmon
- Dinner roll
- Sweet potato
- Carrot, broccoli, cauliflower mix
 - Pears
 - Water

Snack

- Oatmeal cookies
- Low fat milk



Make Your Own Menu



Breakfast:

Lunch:

Snack:

Dinner:

Snack:

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Healthy Snacking

Whether you are at home, work, school or a sporting event, snacking is a great way to keep you full of energy. Here are some ways to make your snacks healthy and delicious!

• **Nutrition Challenge**

Pack a healthy snack to take on an afternoon trip to the park with your family.

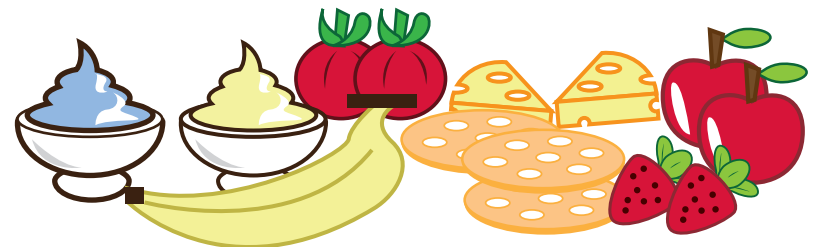
• **Tips**

- Get more, eat less! – Choose foods that have lots of nutrients such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to get the most out of your snacks.
- Keep it small! – Use small bowls and plates when preparing snacks. This will keep you from eating too much.
- Plan Ahead! – Have healthy snacks around the house and pack them when you go to school, work, or sports. This will make you less likely to eat junk food.

• **10 Healthy Snack Ideas**

1. Apple slices dipped in peanut butter
2. Animal crackers dipped in a pudding cup
3. Baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, or bell peppers dipped in low-fat ranch dressing
4. Celery topped with peanut butter and raisins
5. Dried fruit
6. Fruit yogurt
7. Low fat cheese with whole grain crackers
8. Raisins
9. Strawberries, bananas, and low fat yogurt smoothie
10. Trail mix

For more snack ideas visit www.eatright.org and search for 'healthy snacks'.



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Making Quick Meals Better

Grocery stores now sell many meals that are already made and only need to be heated in the microwave or oven before eating. These meals are very quick and easy to prepare but may not always have all the food groups you need in them. You can add simple ingredients to these quick meals to make them more balanced and healthy.

• **Nutrition Challenge**

Have each family member make a healthy dish for a family dinner.

• **Breakfast**

• **Pancakes or Waffles**

- Add fruits, like bananas or berries on top of the pancakes or waffles.
- Eat 1-2 eggs in addition to pancakes or waffles to add protein.

• **Breakfast Sandwich**

- Try a sandwich that has turkey sausage instead of pork or beef sausage.
- Eat fruit on the side to get one of your servings.

• **Oatmeal**

- Add in dried fruits such as cranberries or raisins.
- Serve with a side of fruit such as cantaloupe or bananas.



• Lunch

• Canned Soup

- Add canned or leftover vegetables like peas, carrots, or green beans to your cooked soup.
- Serve with whole grain crackers.
- Add a sandwich or fruit to balance out the soup.

• Mac and Cheese

- Add vegetables, like broccoli, either on the side or mixed in.
- Mix in sliced or cubed ham.

• Baked Potato

- Melt cheese on top.
- Serve with vegetables such as broccoli, either on the side or on top.
- Top with salsa. Mix salsa with cottage cheese for a different spin on your potato!



• Dinner

• Hamburgers

- Serve with lettuce, tomato, pickle, and onion to add flavor and vegetables.
- Use baked frozen fries as a side dish to cut down on oil.
- Drink milk or 100% fruit juice with the meal.

• Spaghetti

- Add ground turkey or ground lean beef to canned tomato sauce.
- Try whole grain pasta.
- Serve with salad or raw vegetables.

• Marinated Chicken Breast

- Serve with microwave baked potato.
- Add chicken breast to a packet of pre-made noodles or rice that has been heated up.
- Serve with salad or a vegetable.





Eating on the Go

Going out to restaurants is fun and convenient! However, it is not always easy to eat healthy at a restaurant. Here are some tips that can make choosing healthy foods fun and easy.

• Nutrition Challenge

When eating out, have family members order different healthy dishes and taste each one.

• Drinks



– Low fat milk and water are your best choices.

• Salads



– Pick salads with lots of vegetables and less cheese.
– Ordering low fat salad dressing on the side lowers the fat of the meal and also lets you decide how much you use.

• Main Dish



– Look for items that have been grilled, baked, or broiled. Avoid items that have been fried.
– These lean meats make healthy and tasty meals: turkey, chicken, seafood, sirloin steak.
– When ordering pasta, stick to red sauces instead of white and cream sauces.

• Side Dishes



– Try ordering a baked potato, steamed vegetables, or fresh fruit in place of French fries.

• Dessert



– Fresh fruit is always a great option to order for dessert!
– Frozen yogurt and soft serve ice cream are delicious choices.



Grocery Store List

Shopping at the grocery store can sometimes be a big task. With all the choices of food it can be confusing to know which ones to buy and which ones to stay away from.

• Nutrition Challenge

Look up a healthy recipe and take a trip to the grocery store to buy the ingredients with your family.

• Tips

- **Make a list beforehand and stick to it!**
 - This will help you avoid walking through every aisle and buying things just because they look good.
- **Try to stick to the outer edges of the store.**
 - All the fresh food and produce is usually on the outer edges of the store, so try and avoid the middle aisles. This will also keep you from buying junk food.

Here is a sample list of great ingredients for active people.

• Fruits

- Fresh- Apples, Bananas, Berries, Cantaloupe, Grapes, Kiwi, Oranges, Strawberries
- 100% Fruit juice/boxes
- Canned Fruit (in its own juice)
- Dried Fruit- Raisins
- Frozen Fruits



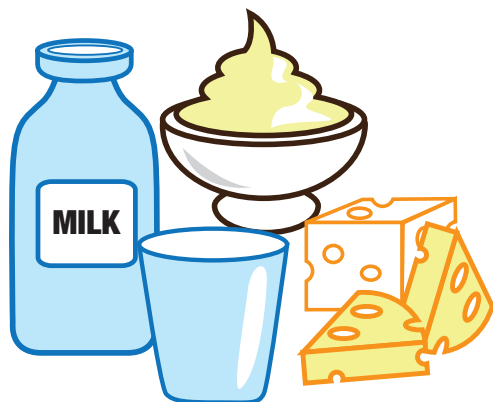
• Vegetables

- Fresh- Asparagus, Broccoli, Carrots, Cauliflower, Green Beans, Peppers
- Any Dark Greens
- Frozen Stir Fry
- Frozen Vegetables
- Salad Mix
- Potatoes/Sweet Potatoes



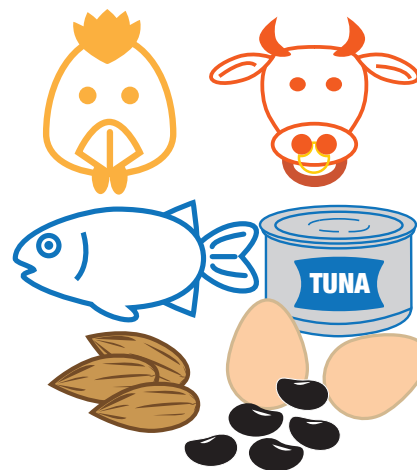
• Dairy

- Cottage Cheese
- Low-fat Cheese (cubed cheese, cheese slices, or string cheese)
- Low-fat or Skim Milk
- Low-fat Yogurt
- Pudding



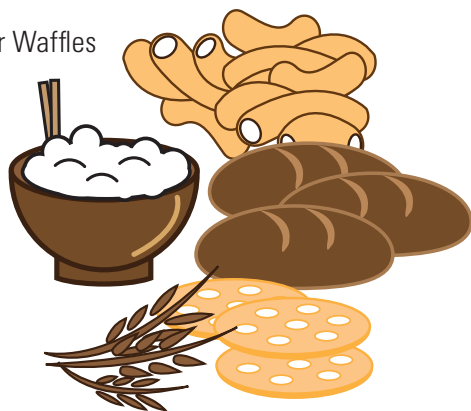
• Protein

- Beans (kidney, black, pinto, or soy)
- Chicken Breasts (boneless and skinless)
- Deli Meat
- Eggs
- Fish (frozen or fresh)
- Ground Beef (80-90% lean)
- Tuna (water packed)
- Peanut Butter
- Nuts



• Grains

- Brown, Wild, White Rice
- Graham Crackers
- Granola and Cereal Bars
- Frozen Whole Grain Toaster Waffles
- Oatmeal
- Pasta
- Popcorn
- Whole Grain Bread
- Whole Grain Cereal
- Whole Grain Crackers



• Desserts and snacks

- Fig Bar Cookies
- Frozen Fruit Juice Bars
- Frozen Yogurt Bars
- Oatmeal Cookies
- Peanut Butter with Crackers
- Sherbet or Frozen Yogurt





Resources

Nutrition can often seem confusing at first glance, but there are many tools out there that can help. Dietitians are a great resource, whether you want to go see one to get tips about ways to improve your diet or you just have a simple question. There are also many websites that have great information about nutrition.

Below are a few that can help you learn more about healthy eating:

Eat Right.org

www.eatright.org/Public/

This is a great place to look for more information on nutrition. There is also a section where you can locate a dietitian in your area.

My Pyramid.gov

www.mypyramid.gov

Use tools on this site to plan your personal food pyramid.

Diabetes Exercise and Sports Association

www.diabetes-exercise.org

This site has loads of information about people who live an active lifestyle with diabetes.

Celiac Sprue Association

www.csaceliacs.org/recipes.php

This website has lots of information for people who are on or wanting to start a gluten free diet. Check out all the cool recipes listed there!

The Vegetarian Resource Group (VRG)

www.vrg.org/nutrition/

This is a great website for vegetarians or people looking to become vegetarians.

References:

1. Burgoon LA, Fink HH, Midesky AE. *Practical Applications in Sports Nutrition*. 2nd ed. Sudbury, Massachusetts: Jones and Bartlett Publishers; 2009.
2. Clark, N. *Sports Nutrition Guidebook*. 4th ed. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics; 2008.

TRACK YOUR SUCCESS

WHAT DID YOU DO TODAY?

- Mark each way you chose to be healthy.
- Use the two blank boxes to track other ways you chose to be healthy.



#1. Be more active

Try to exercise at least 30 minutes a day.
Play a game outside instead of watching TV.

2. Eat more fruits and vegetables

Eat at least 5 a day.
Eat fruits and vegetables for a snack instead of junk food.



3. Drink more water

Carry a water bottle throughout the day.
Drink water instead of soda.



For more ideas on how to become a healthier athlete, look at the TRAIN@Home nutrition and exercise guide books.

TODAY I CHOSE TO

SUN MON TUES WED THUR FRI SAT

Be More Active

Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

Drink more water



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