

TEEN NUTRITION BLUEPRINT

the 'blueprint basics'

Make healthy choice

A rough and fairly safe estimate for a teen's calorie allowance is **2,500 to 5,000** a day. If you are fairly active, think closer to 2,500; if you exercise intensely every day, lean towards 5,000.

Pro Protein



Protein and its building blocks, amino acids, help your body replace damaged cells and make new ones, so they can help you overcome muscle breakdown. When you work out or play hard, your requirements become that much greater, as you need to replenish the additional cells lost to heavy exertion. Incorporate protein into your diet every day, and ideally every meal, with attention to its source and serving size. With meats, one serving of protein is about the size of a deck of cards or an iPhone.

Get Complex With Your Carbs

Carbohydrates are your primary source for quick-burn energy. They are broken down into two categories: simple and complex. Simple carbs come from white breads, sugar, soda, juices and chips. Complex carbs are higher in "good for you fiber," resulting in their slower breakdown for a longer energy burn. Complex carbs are used more efficiently in your body and are less likely to convert into fat (unless you overeat).

Don't Forget the Fats

When you exercise, your body burns through the carb energy first and very quickly. To keep going strong, you'll need some alternative fuel sources. Fats come in handy here and provide long-burning sustained reserve energy to keep you going long into the game. Fifteen to twenty percent of your daily intake of calories should come from mono- and poly-unsaturated fats.

Extra Nutrients

Taking a good daily multivitamin will help make sure you get key nutrients such as calcium and iron. But don't think that since you pop a pill each morning you can grab all the junk food you want through the day. A daily vitamin should not be seen as a replacement for good nutrition. Essential Fatty Acids and Omega 3's are important for the young athlete as well, not only for their energy-producing capabilities, but also because they support your heart and arteries to keep up with your increased workload. These essential fats can help reduce inflammation in joints and help you maintain peak cognitive responses and alertness.

Protein

- Lean red meat such as top round and sirloin tips
- Fish
- Grilled chicken
- Roasted Turkey
- Pork
- Eggs
- Nuts
- Soybeans
- Low-fat dairy such as milk, yogurt and cheese

Complex Carbs

- Whole wheat pastas and breads
- Rice
- Sweet potatoes
- Squash
- Zucchini
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Beans

Unsaturated Fats

- Avocados
- Seeds
- Nuts
- Vegetable & olive oil

Omega 3's

- Flaxseed oil
- Walnuts
- Shrimp
- Raw tuna