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High-Carbohydrate Diet Important For Young Athletes

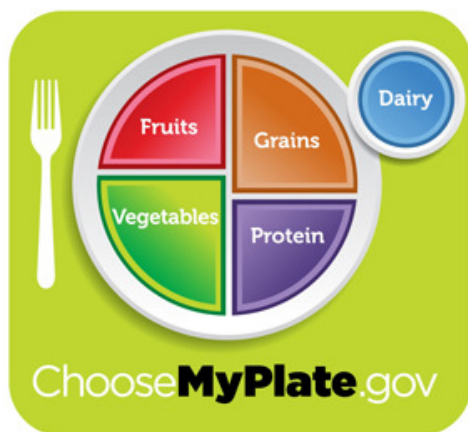
By Suzanne Nelson
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Rider:
Daily consumption of whole grains, fruits, vegetables and dairy

is essential

When your child athlete thinks of food, you should think about carbohydrates with the primary food sources being the whole-grain products, vegetables and fruits that make up three quarters of the FDA's new MyPlate food guidance system

think about carbohydrates [1],
products, vegetables and fruits that
make up three quarters of the FDA's new MyPlate [2] food guidance system



Studies have shown that adequate dietary carbohydrate is essential on a daily basis, especially after exercise, to restore levels of carbohydrates stored in the muscles and liver, which, as the preferred fuel for peak athletic performance.

be consumed on a daily basis (glycogen) stored in the muscles and liver, which, as the preferred fuel for peak athletic performance, is

- Only 46% of the typical American diet is derived from carbohydrates and protein.
- Active children should get 50 to 55% of their total caloric intake from carbohydrates, or about 2.7 grams per pound of body weight.
- A child athlete who needs 2,500 calories per day thus requires 343 grams of carbohydrate per day (there are 4 calories in 1 gram of carbohydrate).
- Most carbohydrates should be obtained from "complex" (starch) carbohydrates found in vegetables, breads, cereals, pasta, and rice, rather than "simple" (sugar) carbohydrates found in milk and fruits. Although both simple and complex carbohydrates provide energy for working muscles, high

carbohydrates are about 2.2 grams per pound of body weight. Active children should get 50 to 55% of their total caloric intake from carbohydrates, or about 2.7 grams per pound of body weight. A child athlete who needs 2,500 calories per day thus requires 343 grams of carbohydrate per day (there are 4 calories in 1 gram of carbohydrate). Most carbohydrates should be obtained from "complex" (starch) carbohydrates found in vegetables, breads, cereals, pasta, and rice, rather than "simple" (sugar) carbohydrates found in milk and fruits. Although both simple and complex carbohydrates provide energy for working muscles, high

carbohydrates contain more essential nutrients, like B vitamins and minerals, which are lacking in simple carbohydrates

ins, iron, dietary fiber,

These guidelines for carbohydrate intake assure that the you adequate energy on a daily basis. Athletes who consume low repetition muscle and liver glycogen stores. This leads to training and performance.

with athlete is consuming low-energy diets will slow the fatigue, and may impair

Low energy diets are common among athletes such as gymnasts, wrestlers, and other athletes who traditionally maintain low body weights for appearance or performance. [3] However, even during weight loss and energy restriction, a diet high in carbohydrate appears to be beneficial in helping athletes maintain high-intensity

figure skaters, and other athletes who maintain low body weights for appearance or performance. [3] However, even during weight loss and energy restriction, a diet high in carbohydrate appears to be beneficial in helping athletes maintain high-intensity



performance capacity.

The message from these studies is clear: not only is a diet rich in carbohydrates [4] needed, but extra carbohydrate is beneficial as well. The fatigue and poor performance associated with glycogen depletion can be prevented by a carbohydrate-rich diet and with periodic rest days to give the muscles

high in nutrient-dense carbohydrates. The fatigue and poor performance associated with glycogen depletion can be prevented by a carbohydrate-rich diet and with periodic rest days to give the muscles

For a list of high-carbohydrate foods, click here [1].

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Revised August 17, 2011

Teaser title: Whole grains, Fruits and Vegetables Essential for Young Athletes
Teaser image:

Athletes



Teaser text:

When your child athlete thinks of food, think about whole-grain products, vegetables, and fruits that make up MyPlate food guidance system

t carbohydrates, such as the three-fourths of the FDA's new

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