

## ***Increase your health by eating more effectively!***

***We are what we eat! You cannot run a high performance car on bad fuel...the same holds true for your body. If you want to maintain your health for many years, you need to maintain healthy eating habits as well. Listed below are several methods to optimize your health through a better diet. This is not a 'crash program,' but comprehensive steps to help you be a healthier and feel better. Try one modification at a time, or several at once, whatever you are comfortable with...you'll feel the difference!***

### **One: Eat a good breakfast**

Don't try to go through the day on an empty stomach! Get into the habit of eating a balanced breakfast which include high-carbohydrate foods (such as cereals, bagels, or toast) in addition to fruit. It will give you energy throughout the day and especially at practice. Ideally, you should also have any early lunch or snack while at school, though avoiding greasy, fatty foods.

### **Two: Drink more water**

Drink at least one big glass of water in the morning, in addition to every meal, and in the evening rather than just coffee or soda. Drinking water though out the day also assures your body having enough fluids.

### **Three: Eat more raw vegetables and fruit**

Fruits and vegetables help you meet your daily carbohydrate need and increase needed fiber. Green vegetables such as broccoli are especially nutrient-rich while orange or red vegetables and fruits, such as carrots or cantaloupe, are great sources of beta-carotene.

### **Four: Increase your carbohydrate intake**

The most readily available source of energy for our bodies are carbohydrates such as breads, bagels, rice, pastas and potatoes. By increasing your intake of carbohydrates you will increase your body's energy reserves while supplying your body an excellent low-fat food.

### **Five: Eliminate or reduce alcohol consumption**

Excess alcohol is a poison, and the body will work overtime to expel it, causing dehydration, which will eventually hurt your health and well being.

### **Six: Eliminate artificial sweeteners from your diet**

Artificial sweeteners known as 'Saccharin' and 'Nutrasweet', which are found in most diet sodas and no-sugar foods, constricts blood flow throughout your body and brain, and might cause headaches if consumed in excess.

### **Seven: Reduce caffeine intake**

Caffeine and other stimulants 'rev' up your nervous system needlessly and cause dehydration while disrupting your concentration and sleeping patterns, influencing your daily and academic performance. Limit your consumption and avoid becoming dependent on the 'rush' of caffeine.

### **Eight: Limit salt intake**

Most the salt we need each day is in the food we eat, especially if it is mostly from restaurants, cans, or freezers. Try to avoid adding salt as too much will dehydrate and make it difficult for the body to pass nutrients to your muscles.

### **Nine: Eat fewer highly sweetened foods**

Added sugars, such as sucrose, might cause your body to produce too much insulin, which can cause hypoglycemia or low blood sugar and leave you feeling weak.

### **Ten: Avoid sources of aluminum**

Sources of aluminum include canned sodas and beer, or food cooked in aluminum pots, as well as some anti-perspirents. Aluminum, when absorbed into your nervous system, slows the transmission of nerve impulses and reaction time. There has also been a link between aluminum in the brain and the degenerating disease of Alzheimer's in older people.

### **Eleven: Eliminate carbonated sodas**

Some soda drinks contain as much as eleven teaspoons of simple sugar per can, and many large amounts of caffeine. Such large amounts of sugar can spike your insulin levels, while large amounts of caffeine can interact with the body's ability to absorb calcium, which could reduce bone strength.

### **Twelve: Reduce high-fat dairy products**

While low-fat milks and yogurts are good for you in limited quantities, dairy products can contain high levels of fat. Avoid full milk, soft cheese, and ice cream.

### **Thirteen: Limit intake of preservatives and artificial food colorings**

Food additives and colorings are common in most processed foods, and may be linked to reducing the efficiency of the brain and nervous system.

**By adopting one or all of these modifications, you will notice the difference in how you feel and perform. Remember...train hard, and also train smart by fitting all the pieces in the fitness puzzle together!**

**Want to loose weight?** Binge diets don't work long term and can be harmful! Follow some basic guidelines for gradual weight loss:

- ✓ **Know your correct weight.** Not everyone should be 'skinny' like a distance runner, or 'built' like a thrower. Look in the mirror, and if you see some room for improvement, make a plan by consulting with your coach, doctor, or nutritionist. Do not starve yourself to be like somebody else.
- ✓ **Limit your quantity of food, and increase the quality.** Eliminate late night snacks, as well as snack foods high in sugars (*deserts, sodas, cookies, alcohol*). Also limit your intake of 'creamy,' fatty, greasy or oily foods, while cutting back on quantities at mealtime. Begin to follow some of the diet modifications listed on this sheet.
- ✓ **Be consistent.** Avoid the 'I'll make it up tomorrow' syndrome and adopt a healthier diet as a daily routine.

**Supplements:** *The following are available and could further improve performance. Remember, these supplements have the greatest effect when supplementing a healthy balanced diet, and are not a substitute for training. No supplement can fully metabolize if it lacks food to pair with.*

**Daily Multi Vitamin:** A good daily multi-vitamin such as 'Centrum' helps replace many of the vitamins and minerals that you use in training. Remember to take with breakfast, and don't take alone, as vitamins must attaché themselves to food molecules to be activated.

**For girls-women: Iron with Vitamin C:** Many females may become iron deficient, and this can cause tiredness and lack of energy. Iron is not always ready absorbed into your body, but having tablets combined with Vitamin C promotes the absorption rate. See your physician for a full blood test.

### **Fourteen: Reduce the intake of fats**

Excess fat in the diet slows your metabolism making you sluggish and making training more difficult. High-fat diets have also been linked to heart disease, stroke, cancer, and other ailments. Fat in excess can also increase your body fat and weight.

### **Fifteen: Limit red meat in your diet**

Most Americans eat far more red meat than necessary to be healthy. Red meat is the main culprit of our fat intake, and a source of steroids and antibiotics which in the long run could be harmful to our bodies.

*Sources: Speed Dynamics; American Institute of Sport, and handouts from Bob Rush*