

## Healthy Eating helps sportsmen

Did you know that what you eat can affect how well you play sport?

Junk food or fast food will cause fatigue, lack of concentration and a sluggish sports performance.

We should all eat a wide variety of food from the four food groups

Food Group 1: This group contains your usual breads, cereals and grains

These foods provide the body with carbohydrates (the main fuel source for the body) they provide more sustained energy than cakes, pies or lollies

Food Group 2: This group contains your everyday fruit and vegetables

These foods provide you with fibre, vitamins and minerals

Food Group 3: In this group there are dairy products

These foods provide great sources of protein and calcium

Food Group 4: This group contains lean meats, chicken, seafood and dried beans

These foods provide an essential source of protein and the mineral iron

Note: for most people red meat takes about two days to digest.

Did you know that?

1 gram of fat = 37 kilojoules of energy

1 gram of protein = 17 kilojoules of energy

1 gram of carbohydrate = 16 kilojoules of energy

Some of you may be wondering why do we just eat fat as it gives us the most energy. Well this is because carbohydrates are our bodies main fuel source

Eating before sport:

What should you eat? You should eat foods that are high in carbohydrates (foods from group 1)

When should you eat? You should eat at normal meal times except when close to the start of your game. Your last meal should be no closer than two hours from the start of your game.

Eating during sport:

Should you eat during sport? If your sport lasts less than 90 minutes then you don't need to eat anything

If your sport last longer than 90 minutes then you should eat a small number of easy to eat foods such as a muesli bar each hour

Eating after sport:

What should you eat? You should eat foods that are high in carbohydrates to replenish glycogen levels within muscles

When should you eat? You should eat within the first two hours after you have finished exercising because that is when your glycogen re-absorption is at its highest

Hydration:

When should you Hydrate? Well before you start to exercise, as often as you can during exercise and for a small time after exercising.

What should you drink? Before exercise – water to get maximum hydration

During exercise – sports drink e.g. powerade to replenish carbohydrates

After exercise – sports drink and water to replenish carbohydrates and rehydrate

Summary: If you incorporate these ideas into your diet then you will perform better on game day.