



SPEED PROJECT

Sport & Prevention of Emerging Eating Disorders

The role of nutrition in adolescent athletes

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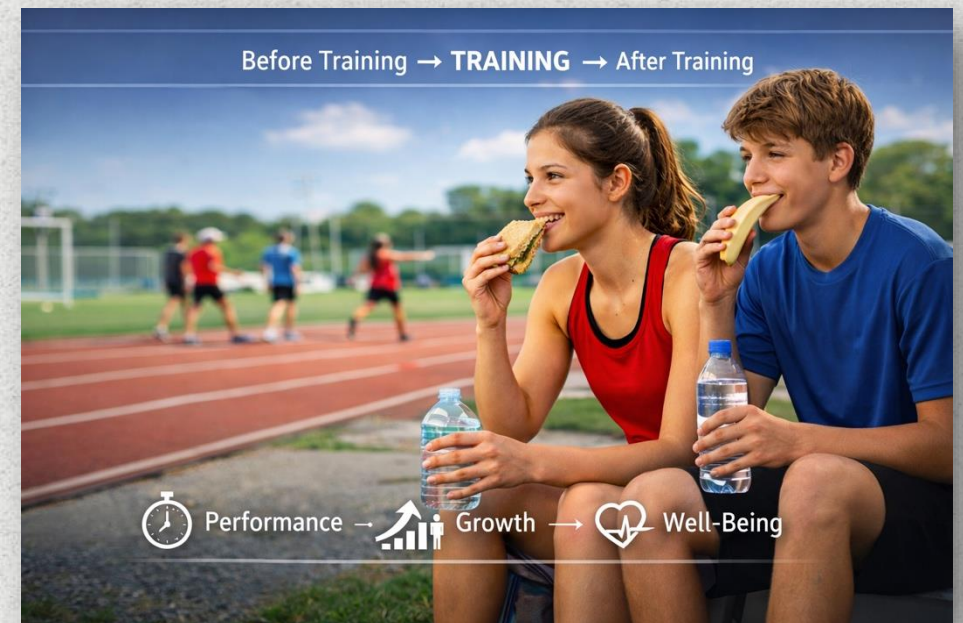
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The role of nutrition in adolescent athletes

Food is the fuel that powers performance — and the growth and wellbeing of young athletes.

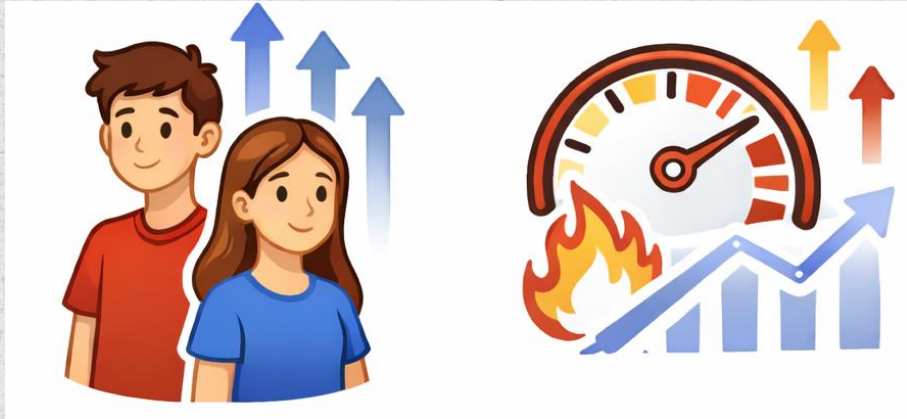
Yet it is often the most neglected aspect of preparation.



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Adolescence: a Key Period



During adolescence the body grows, metabolism speeds up, and energy and nutrient needs increase.

A drop in performance, higher injury risk, and loss of enjoyment in sport can all result from poor nutrition habits.



They skip meals and are easily drawn to tasty but nutrient-poor snacks.

They follow food trends and often fail to meet their nutritional requirements at a critical stage of development.

Adolescence and Sport Nutrition



Macronutrients:

Carbs replenish energy. Proteins build muscles. Healthy fats support metabolism.



Micronutrients:

Vitamins, minerals, and proper hydration are essential for focus and recovery.

The Role of the Sports Environment



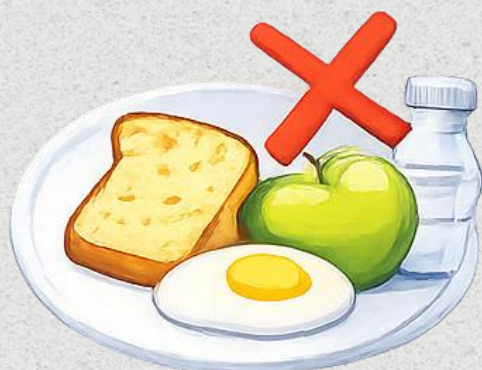
Coaches as role models:

Adolescents learn by observing. Adults in sport can convey positive messages about nutrition, promoting balance and awareness.

Key guidance:

- Observe athletes and refer families to nutrition professionals when needed.
- Avoid judgements about body shape or “miracle diets”.
- Focus on consistency, variety, and listening to the body’s signals.

Common Mistakes and Myths



BREAKFAST



**NOT ENOUGH
CARB**

**TOO MUCH
SUGARS**

Recurring mistakes to avoid:

- Skipping breakfast
- Cutting carbohydrates too drastically
- Drinking too little
- Overusing supplements

No food is inherently “good” or “bad”. Balance between what one eats and what one does is essential.

Nutrition, like training, requires consistency.



The role of nutrition in adolescent athletes

Nutrition is an integral part of athletic development and personal growth.

A well-nourished young athlete is less likely to get injured, healthier overall, and more motivated in sport.

In the next videos, we will explore:

- How to adapt energy needs
- Choose appropriate foods
- Organize meals across the different phases of training

