



# Health and Wellness Manual

May 2017

**Special Olympics**  
British Columbia



# Special Olympics BC Health and Wellness Manual

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# Introduction

## Why does being healthy matter?

Is it really important to cut down on sugar? Does it really help to avoid foods that are loaded with salt and empty calories? Is it beneficial to get active and exercise every day? Yes.

Everything you eat and drink impacts your health and wellness. So do other aspects of life, such as your sleep habits, physical activity, your level of happiness and your ability to manage stress. When any one of these areas is not being cared for, there is an imbalance. We know that we do not feel “good” when we are stressed, tired, and unhappy. But we also do not realize how much better we can feel with proper diet and exercise.

When your body is in balance, you have wellness. When your body is out of balance, it is easier for disease to set in. Too often, people only seek help after they have been diagnosed with a serious disease, such as diabetes or heart disease. Not only is it important to avoid disease, but to strive for optimal health, where we can also perform our best.

In this book, you will see sections on nutrition, hydration, fitness and mental wellness and relaxation. These are just a few tools and resources to support a healthy lifestyle. Remember to personalize this book by adding articles, pictures, quotes, recipes, and anything else that motivates and supports you to live a healthy lifestyle.



Health is wealth! Optimal health means you wake up in the morning feeling energized and ready to take on the day’s exciting challenges. Health is when you are able to walk around all day exploring a new city. Health means you are able to carry your groceries to the front door. Health means you feel happy and confident.

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***“Good, better, best, never let it rest, until your good is better than your best.”***

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Ashten Black, Health and Sport Science Coordinator for Special Olympics BC

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# NUTRITION

# Educational information

## Grocery shopping

Eating healthy begins at the grocery store: Here are some tips to follow while you shop:

**<http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/healthy-eating-saine-alimentation/tips-conseils/shopping-epicerie-eng.php0>**

General food label tips: Learn about label nutrition facts such as the ingredient list and the percent daily value, as well as interactive tools for healthy eating.

**[Canada.ca/NutritionFacts](http://Canada.ca/NutritionFacts)**

*Reference:*

*Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools (2007), Ministries of Education and Health*

# Tips for success: The three Ps

## Plan

- Plan meals for the week and make a list of what you need.

**FOOD GUIDE TIP:** Make sure you have all your food groups!

## Purchase

- Stick to your list and go when you aren't hungry.
- Choose fruits and vegetables that are in season and local.
- Compare different brands to find the cheapest.
- Buy store brand when possible.

**FOOD GUIDE TIP:** Always get lots of different coloured fruits and veggies!

## Prepare

- Prepare meals ahead of time when you can and freeze.
- Double or triple recipes so you have extra.
- Use leftovers in creative ways.



# Picking your portion sizes

“I need to eat how much of what?”

The world of portion control can seem like a daunting and confusing puzzle, but when you break it down, it can be quite simple!

## Can't remember what a serving is? It's all your in hands!

- Your fist = one serving of fruits or grains
- Your palm = one serving of meats, about the thickness of your little finger
- The tip of your thumb = about how much fat (like butter) in one serving
- Your two hands cupped together = one serving of vegetables

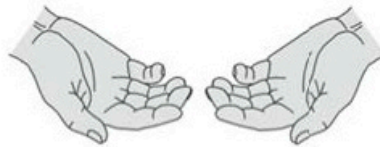
## Handy portion guide

Your hands can be very useful in estimating appropriate portions. When planning a meal, use the following portion sizes as a guide:



**FRUITS\*/GRAINS & STARCHES\*:**  
Choose an amount the size of your fist for each of Grains & Starches, and Fruit.

**MILK & ALTERNATIVES\*:** Drink up to 250 mL (8 oz) of low-fat milk with a meal.



**VEGETABLES\*:**  
Choose as much as you can hold in both hands.



**MEAT & ALTERNATIVES\*:**  
Choose an amount up to the size of the palm of your hand and the thickness of your little finger.



**FATS\*:**  
Limit fat to an amount the size of the tip of your thumb.

\* Food group names taken from *Beyond the Basics: Meal Planning for Healthy Eating, Diabetes Prevention and Management* © Canadian Diabetes Association, 2005. Please refer to this resource for more details on meal planning.

# Portioning your plate

You know how to measure a serving size based on your hand, but what about your plate, how much is enough?

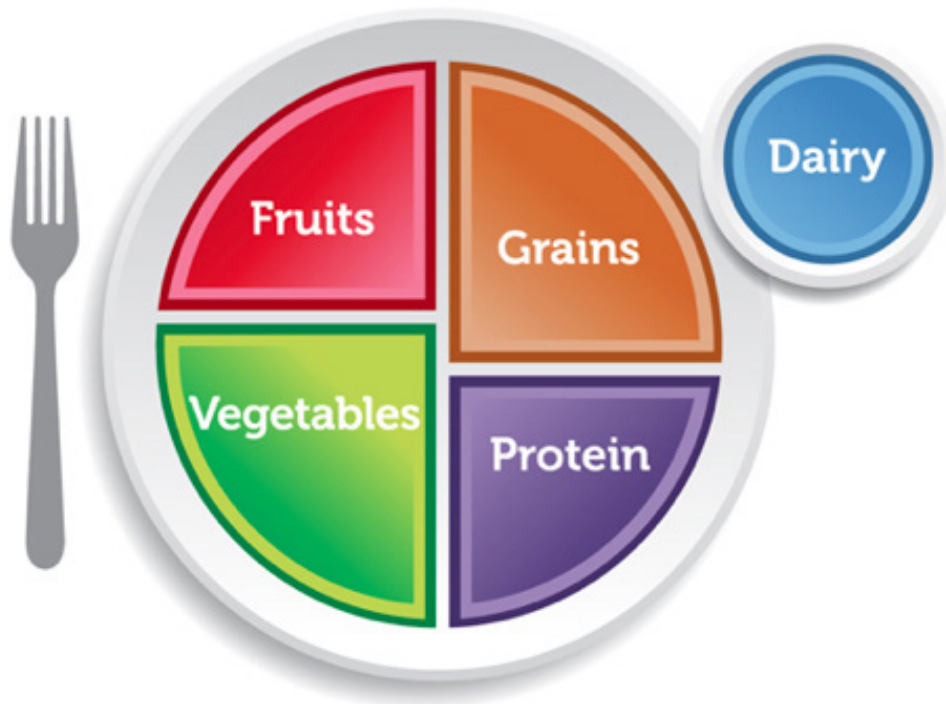
**ALWAYS REMEMBER your plate should be:**

- 1/4 meats
- 1/4 grains
- 1/4 vegetables
- 1/4 fruit

This will make sure that you're getting all of your daily servings.

**In a day you need (for ages 19 to 50):**

- Seven to eight (females) or eight to 10 (males) fruit/vegetable servings
- Six to seven servings of grains
- Two servings of milk and alternatives
- Two servings of meat and alternatives





# Know your food groups

Nutrition is important to your everyday health.

The food you eat gives you energy to learn at school, work at your job, and perform your best in sports. Eating a balanced and healthy diet will allow you to be active in your daily life and keep you from getting sick.

All the foods that you eat fit into a food group. Each group helps your body with different things, so it is important that you eat foods from each group every day!

- **Grains** give your body the energy it needs each day.
- **Vegetables** have nutrients that keep you healthy.
- **Fruits** help your body stay healthy and aid in healing.
- **Oils and fats**, in small amounts, are needed to help your body to work properly.
- **Dairy** keeps your bones and teeth strong.
- **Meats and beans** make your muscles and body strong.

# Caffeine

## The drug, the myth, the legend

Yes, you read that right. Caffeine is the world's most popular drug, with the majority of Canadians getting their fix from a cup of coffee.

Research has shown that caffeine can improve physical performance in longer distance events like running or swimming, but not short term, like sprinting or weight lifting.

**But all you need for this benefit is two to three mg/kg of body weight, or about 145 to 220 mg. About one cup of drip coffee!**

### **Pay attention to what you are adding to your coffee:**

- Sometimes it is what goes in it that is more damaging to your health than the actual coffee!
- Try choosing skim milk instead of cream, or Stevia instead of regular sugar!

### **But how much caffeine can I drink a day?**

Health Canada suggests no more than 400 to 450 mg a day, or three to four eight oz cups.

### **Caffeine affects everyone differently!**

- Genetics
- Level of training
- Amount of caffeine is regularly consumed

# Nutrition and exercise

Eating well on a regular basis will keep your body healthy and in top shape for participating in sports.

To fuel your body for each workout, focus on what you are eating at three specific times:

- **Before exercising**
- **While exercising**
- **After exercising**

Focusing on what you eat at these times will build up the energy you need to perform the workout, keep that energy while you are working out, and help your body recover from your workout.

One of the most important things to remember when you are trying to decide what to eat at any of these times is to eat foods that are familiar to you!

Some people get nervous before big events or have a hard time eating early in the morning. Some foods may cause an upset stomach which can take away from performance on the field, court, or track. Just like you practice your sport before you go to an event or game, make sure you practice your eating habits. Have a plan and stick with it so that you can avoid feeling sick!

## Meal planning for competitions

### BEFORE COMPETITION

- The night before a competition, eat a balanced meal with all the food groups.
- Eat foods that you know and have eaten before to avoid an upset stomach.
- Try to avoid a big meal right before competition.

### DURING COMPETITION

- If you are getting tired, eat a small snack that will give you quick energy. Like a handful of trail mix or a granola bar!

### AFTER COMPETITION

- Start refueling your body right away to repair damaged muscles.
  - Eat simple carbs such as chocolate milk or fruit right away.
  - Eat a well-balanced meal for dinner.
  - Rehydrate with water.
-

## 1. Nutrition before an event

### DAY BEFORE THE EVENT

**The night before:** it is important to get a good dinner to start building your energy. Focus on eating grains, lean meats, fruits, and vegetables to get plenty of carbohydrates! Make sure you also drink water so you are ready for the next day.

### DAY OF THE EVENT

**3 or 4 hours before the event:** You should eat a well balanced meal of familiar foods and drink water with the meal. Avoid foods high in fat such as cheeseburgers and fries because these can take a long time to digest and make you feel tired.

- If you have an event or practice early in the morning you may not have time to eat a full meal beforehand. If this is the case, it is very important to eat a good meal the night before. The morning of the event, eat a small meal or snack an hour before it begins.

**1 hour before the event:** Eat a small snack (like a cereal bar or piece of fruit) and drink water to keep you focused while you are exercising!

## 2. Nutrition during the event

### FOOD

**Events or practices shorter than 60 minutes:** It is not necessary to eat to maintain your energy.

**Events or practices longer than 60 minutes:** You may need to eat a little bit to make sure you have energy.

- Some foods that can give you a boost of energy while you are working out are fruits and fruit juices, granola and cereal bars, and sports drinks. Eat only small amounts at a time though to avoid feeling full or sick.

### WATER

**Every 15 minutes:** Try and take a break every 15 minutes while exercising to drink water.

**Events or practices longer than 60 minutes:** You may want to try drinking a sports drink to keep your energy up during workouts lasting longer than an hour.

### 3. Nutrition after an event

#### SNACK

15- 30 minutes after: Eat a small snack to begin to regain your energy! This will also help repair any damage done to your muscle; you will not be as sore the next day!

- It is sometimes hard to want to eat something right after you exercise because you are hot and sweaty. There are many options to choose from, so try out a few different snacks after practices. This way you will know which snacks work best for you!

- Applesauce
- Chocolate milk
- Graham crackers
- 100% fruit juice
- Soy milk
- Low-fat cheese and crackers
- Banana
- Fig cookies
- Peanut butter crackers
- Cereal bar
- Fruit yogurt
- Trail mix
- Cottage cheese and fruit
- Sports drink
- Whole grain bagel

#### MEAL

**One to two hours after:** Eat a full meal. Give your body back all the energy it lost by eating a balanced meal filled with carbohydrates, protein, and fat.

# Nutrition labels

## What you should know

**DID YOU KNOW:** Ingredients are listed in order from the most used ingredient to the least.

### SERVING SIZE

This is different on all labels. Make sure to look if the serving size is for the whole item or only a portion!

### CALORIES

Total energy you will receive from one serving.

### SATURATED, TRANS AND TOTAL FATS

Saturated & trans fats are more unhealthy than other kinds of fats. You want these numbers to be as low as possible.

### CHOLESTEROL

This can be harmful if consumed in large amounts – accumulates in the arteries.

### SODIUM

Reducing salt in your diet can reduce your risk of hypertension and heart disease! Aim to consume about 1500mg a day, but no more than 2300.

### TOTAL CARBOHYDRATE

These compounds are found in bread, pastas, fruits and many other food items. This includes dietary fibre, sugars and starch. It is a good idea to look for items with higher fibre, as most Canadians don't get enough!

### PROTEIN

There is no % Daily Value given because it is usually quite easy to get your recommended daily value through regular diet.

### % DAILY VALUE

This is how much of your daily intake you are getting from your chosen food item. This is based off of a 2,000 kcalorie/day diet. So if you eat more or less than that, make sure to calculate for it!

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>			
Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g)			
Servings Per Container About 8			
<b>Amount Per Serving</b>			
<b>Calories</b> 230	Calories from Fat 72		
		<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g			<b>12%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g			<b>5%</b>
Trans Fat 0g			
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg			<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 160mg			<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g			<b>12%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g			<b>16%</b>
Sugars 1g			
<b>Protein</b> 3g			
Vitamin A			10%
Vitamin C			8%
Calcium			20%
Iron			45%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.			
	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

# Navigating the grocery store

## Don't get lost!

- Make a list and stick to it!
- Choose options with whole grains and low sugar or sodium.
- Look for coupons before going.
- Get member cards to different grocery stores – they are usually free!

## Don't be afraid of the frozen section!

- Frozen foods have all the same nutrients as their fresh counterparts, and last a lot longer, especially fruits and vegetables.
- Choose frozen foods over frozen meals, they are healthier and can be used in many different dishes.

## Do the can-can

- Canned soups and veggies last a lifetime!
- Goods such as beans and lentils are a good source of protein and cost less than chicken and beef.
- Choose cans with low sodium or salt, and fruits with 100 per cent fruit juice.

# A sample grocery store list

## FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

You need seven to eight servings a day

- Five apples or oranges
- Bananas (bunch)
- Grapes
- Honeydew
- Cantaloupe
- One kind of berry (such as strawberries, blueberries, or raspberries)
- 100 per cent fruit juice
- Iceberg lettuce
- Tomatoes
- Cucumber
- Carrots
- Broccoli
- Peppers (red, green, or yellow)
- Onions (red, white, green, or yellow)
- Spinach
- Canned corn, tomatoes, or frozen peas

**Get fruits and vegetables from all colors of the rainbow**

## GRAIN PRODUCTS

- You need six to seven servings a day
- Quaker Oats (for morning oatmeal)
- One loaf bread, or six bagels
- Brown rice
- Quinoa
- Whole grain cereal with less than seven grams of sugar per serving

**Always pick whole grain options**

## DAIRY AND ALTERNATIVES

You need two servings a day

- One litre milk (dairy, soy, or almond)
- Large container Greek yogurt
- Small block of cheese

## MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES

You need two servings a day

- Two chicken/turkey breasts or one pound of lean ground chicken/turkey/beef
- One carton eggs
- One jar peanut or almond butter
- Canned tuna
- Can of black beans or other legumes
- Bulk assorted nuts

Pick one not-so-healthy treat for the week!

## Ready to check out? STOP!

- Do you have at least two items from every food group?
- Did you compare to find the cheapest brand?
- Did you buy fruits and veggies that are in-season?
- Did you get everything on your list for this week's recipes?

## OK! Check out!



# What's a serving?

## One serving of fruits and veggies is...

- A piece of fruit the size of a baseball
- About as much berries, cut fruit, or veggies that you can fit in one hand

## One serving of grain products is...

- One piece of bread
- Half a bagel
- Cooked pasta, rice or quinoa equal to your fist (half a cup)

## One serving of dairy or alternatives is...

- One cup of milk or yogurt
- A piece of cheese about the size of your thumb

## One serving of meat or alternatives is...

- A piece of meat the size of your palm
- One cup of beans
- Two eggs

# Eat a variety of foods

## Grains

- Instead of only eating white bread, white rice, and regular pasta, try to get half your grains each day from whole grains.
- Whole grains are usually brown in color and have more vitamins.

## Meats and beans

- Try to eat meat, fish, eggs, or beans at every meal.
- Choose less fattening meat like turkey, chicken, seafood, and sirloin steak.

## Vegetables

- Try to eat different vegetables each day.
- Eat a variety of colors!
  - Red- Peppers, Orange- Carrots, Yellow- Corn, Green- Broccoli, and Purple- Eggplant.

## Fruits

- Eating fruit as a snack or dessert is a great way to add it to your diet!
- Choose different kinds of fruits such as fresh, dried, frozen, or canned.

## Oils and fats

- Fish, avocados, and nuts are a great way to get healthy oils and fats in your diet.
- Eating and cooking with vegetable oil and olive oil are better for your body.

## Dairy

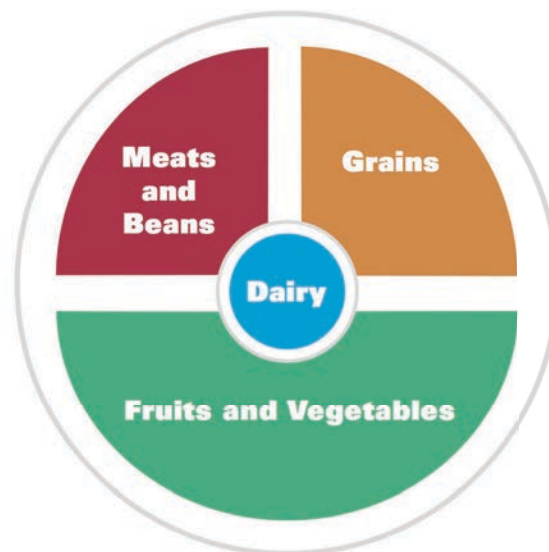
- Try to include one serving of dairy in each meal daily to get enough calcium.
  - Try drinking milk at dinner or putting low fat cheese on your sandwich.
- Choose dairy sources that are low fat or fat free. – Try skim milk, low fat cheese, or fat free yogurt.

# Keep your plate balanced

It is important to try to get at least three different food groups in each meal. Eating different foods allows your body to receive all the vitamins and nutrients it needs. If you eat the same thing every day, you may be missing out on some of these nutrients.

- A good guide to use when you are eating is dividing your plate into three sections. Fruits and vegetables should take up most of your plate.
- Dairy is shown as a circle in the middle of your plate to remind you it can be added to other food groups in your meal.
  - Add dairy by drinking milk as your beverage, or adding low fat cheese to your grains.
- Add healthy oils and fats by using olive oil as your salad dressing.
  - Remember that fish, nuts, and avocados already contain healthy oils and fat!
- Remember to have fun! Try new meals and mix up what you eat each day. This will turn cooking and eating into an adventure!
- Oils are only needed in small amounts and are often added during cooking.

## Example of a balanced plate:



# Why is nutrition important for athletes?

Athletes are very active people who spend a lot of time practicing and competing in sporting events. To be able to stay active it is important to keep your energy up.

Food is what gives your body the energy to walk, run, and play sports. It also keeps you focused while you are doing an event, whether basketball, track, or soccer. Practicing good nutrition can help you improve in your sport!

There are three main nutrients in food that keep your body functioning every day!

**Carbohydrates** fuel your muscles and allow them to work for longer periods of time without getting tired. Carbohydrates are in whole grains, fruits, and vegetables so eat them every day.

**Proteins** build and repair muscles. Protein along with exercise can improve your muscle strength. If you hurt your muscles, protein can also heal them. Good ways to get protein in your diet are eggs, meat, fish, and beans.

**Fats**, when consumed in small amounts, help your body work properly and provide cushion for your body! They also make food tasty. Most people get too much fat, so try to focus on being healthy and eating just a little. Fats are found in butter, salad dressing, mayonnaise, and desserts.

There are also many different **vitamins** and **minerals** that help your body function. Eat a variety of foods from each food group to get all the vitamins and minerals you need each day.

# Healthy snacking

Whether you are at home, work, school or a sporting event, snacking is a great way to keep you full of energy. Here are some ways to make your snacks healthy and delicious!

## NUTRITION CHALLENGE

Pack a healthy snack to take on an afternoon trip to the park with your family.

## Tips

- **Get more, eat less!**  
Choose foods that have lots of nutrients such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains to get the most out of your snacks.
- **Keep it small!**  
Use small bowls and plates when preparing snacks. This will keep you from eating too much.
- **Plan ahead!**  
Have healthy snacks around the house and pack them when you go to school, work, or sports. This will make you less likely to eat junk food.

### 10 HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS

1. Apple slices dipped in peanut butter
2. Animal crackers dipped in a pudding cup
3. Baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, or bell peppers dipped in low-fat ranch dressing
4. Celery topped with peanut butter and raisins
5. Dried fruit
6. Fruit yogurt
7. Low-fat cheese with whole grain crackers
8. Raisins
9. Strawberries, bananas, and low-fat yogurt smoothie
10. Trail mix

*For more snack ideas visit [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org) and search for 'healthy snacks'.*

### TRAIL MIX

Pick two from each category and keep in your bag for snack!

- Seeds: sunflower, pumpkin, flax, hemp, or sesame
- Nuts: almonds, cashew, pecans, peanuts, pistachios or walnuts
- Cereals: Cheerios®, granola, rice crispies, high fiber cereal, or Chex
- Dried fruits: apples, apricots, raisins, pineapple, blueberries, or cranberries
- Don't forget your treat!: Smarties®, chocolate chips, yogurt covered raisins, or M&M's

*Developed by Dr. Sally Willis-Stewart*

# Making quick meals better

Grocery stores now sell many meals that are already made and only need to be heated in the microwave or oven before eating.

These meals are very quick and easy to prepare but may not always have all the food groups you need in them. You can add simple ingredients to these quick meals to make them more balanced and healthy.

## NUTRITION CHALLENGE

Have each family member make a healthy dish for a family dinner.

## Breakfast

- **Pancakes or waffles**
  - Add fruits, like bananas or berries on top of the pancakes or waffles.
  - Eat 1-2 eggs in addition to pancakes or waffles to add protein.
- **Breakfast sandwich**
  - Try a sandwich that has turkey sausage instead of pork or beef sausage.
  - Eat fruit on the side to get one of your servings.
- **Oatmeal**
  - Add in dried fruits such as cranberries or raisins.
  - Serve with a side of fruit such as cantaloupe or bananas.

## Lunch

- **Canned soup**
  - Add canned or leftover vegetables like peas, carrots, or green beans to your cooked soup.
  - Serve with whole grain crackers.
  - Add a sandwich or fruit to balance out the soup.
- **Mac and cheese**
  - Add vegetables, like broccoli, either on the side or mixed in.
  - Mix in sliced or cubed ham.
- **Baked potato**
  - Melt cheese on top.
  - Serve with vegetables such as broccoli, either on the side or on top.
  - Top with salsa. Mix salsa with cottage cheese for a different spin on your potato!

## Dinner

- **Hamburgers**
  - Serve with lettuce, tomato, pickle, and onion to add flavor and vegetables.
  - Use baked frozen fries as a side dish to cut down on oil.
  - Drink milk or 100% fruit juice with the meal.
- **Spaghetti**
  - Add ground turkey or ground lean beef to canned tomato sauce.
  - Try whole grain pasta.
  - Serve with salad or raw vegetables.
- **Marinated chicken breast**
  - Serve with microwave baked potato.
  - Add chicken breast to a packet of pre-made noodles or rice that has been heated up.
  - Serve with salad or a vegetable.



# Eating on the go

Going out to restaurants is fun and convenient! However, it is not always easy to eat healthy at a restaurant. Here are some tips that can make choosing healthy foods fun and easy.

## NUTRITION CHALLENGE

When eating out, have family members order different healthy dishes and taste each one.

### Drinks

- Low-fat milk and water are your best choices.

### Salads

- Pick salads with lots of vegetables and less cheese.
- Ordering low-fat salad dressing on the side lowers the fat of the meal and also lets you decide how much you use.

### Main dish

- Look for items that have been grilled, baked, or broiled. Avoid items that have been fried.
- These lean meats make healthy and tasty meals: turkey, chicken, seafood, sirloin steak.
- When ordering pasta, stick to red sauces instead of white and cream sauces.

### Side dishes

- Try ordering a baked potato, steamed vegetables, or fresh fruit in place of French fries

### Dessert


- Fresh fruit is always a great option to order for dessert!
- Frozen yogurt and soft serve ice cream are delicious choices.

## TRACK YOUR SUCCESS


**WHAT DID YOU DO TODAY?**

- Mark each way you chose to be healthy.
- Use the two blank boxes to track other ways you chose to be healthy.


**#1. Be more active**  
Try to exercise at least 30 minutes a day.  
Play a game outside instead of watching TV.



**2. Eat more fruits and vegetables**  
Eat at least 5 a day.  
Eat fruits and vegetables for a snack instead of junk food.




**3. Drink more water**  
Carry a water bottle throughout the day.  
Drink water instead of soda.




TODAY I CHOSE TO	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Be More Active							
Eat More Fruits and Vegetables							
Drink more water							

*For more ideas on how to become a healthier athlete, look at the TRAIN @Home nutrition and exercise guide books.*



**Special Olympics**

**TRAIN** 

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USA

# Educational information for youth with IDs

Children with intellectual disabilities may be at risk of having inadequate nutrition. If nutrition is left unmanaged, they are at risk for poor health status and future complications like obesity/overweight, vitamin deficiencies, poor growth/development, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

Healthy eating in childhood is critical for maintaining overall health as well as a healthy body weight. A foundation of education, physical activity, and a palate for healthy eating will help children with intellectual disabilities develop a healthy lifestyle now and for the future.

Healthy nutrition in childhood can also help to:

- aid in optimizing physical growth, bone development, and maturation
- increase alertness, energy, and stamina to participate in sport, therapies, educational activities, and social interactions
- reduce frequency of illnesses
- improve feeding and coping skills, which increases independence

In order to maintain a healthy body weight and support optimal development, children should be following Canada's Food Guide and eating their recommended food guide servings every day. Nutrition during childhood should stress variety and exposure to new foods and flavours to encourage an adventurous palate.

## Balanced meals made easy using Canada's Food Guide

- Core meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner): aim for at least 3 of the 4 food groups
- Snacks: aim for at least 1 to 2 of the 4 food groups

### Is your child's food intake meeting his or her needs?

1. Use Table 1 to find out your child's recommended food guide servings per day from each food group.
2. Go to the healthy eating activities section (page 16) for fun and interactive games that focus on achieving daily intake goals.
3. Download a free copy of Canada's Food Guide and print copies of "My Food Guide" servings tracker. Track all foods consumed for a few days and compare to your child's needs. [Canada.ca/foodguide](http://Canada.ca/foodguide)

**Table 1. Daily Food Guide Servings for Young Athletes (2 to 13 years old)**

Age in Years Sex	Children			What is One Food Guide Serving? Look at the examples below.							
	2-3	4-8	9-13								
	Girls and Boys										
Vegetables and Fruit	4	5	6	 Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables 125 mL (½ cup)	 Leafy vegetables Cooked: 125 mL (½ cup) Raw: 250 mL (1 cup)	 Fresh, frozen or canned fruits 1 fruit or 125 mL (½ cup)	 100% Juice 125 mL (½ cup)				
Grain Products	3	4	6	 Bread 1 slice (35 g)	 Bagel ½ bagel (45 g)	 Flat breads ½ pita or ½ tortilla (35 g)	 Cooked rice, bulgar or quinoa 125 mL (½ cup)	 Cereal Cold: 30 g Hot: 175 mL (¾ cup)	 Cooked pasta or couscous 125 mL (½ cup)		
Milk and Alternatives	2	2	3-4	 Milk or powdered milk (reconstituted) 250 mL (1 cup)	 Canned milk (evaporated) 125 mL (½ cup)	 Fortified soy beverage 250 mL (1 cup)	 Yogurt 175 g (¾ cup)	 Kefir 175 g (¾ cup)	 Cheese 50 g (1½ oz.)		
Meat and Alternatives	1	1	1-2	 Cooked fish, shellfish, poultry, lean meat 75 g (2½ oz.) / 125 mL (½ cup)	 Cooked legumes 175 mL (¾ cup)	 Tofu 150 g or 175 mL (¾ cup)	 Eggs 2 eggs	 Peanut or nut butters 30 mL (2 Tbsp)	 Shelled nuts and seeds 60 mL (¼ cup)		

**Oils and Fats**

- Include a small amount – 30 to 45 mL (2 to 3 Tbsp) – of unsaturated fat each day. This includes oil used for cooking, salad dressings, margarine and mayonnaise.
- Use vegetable oils such as canola, olive and soybean.
- Choose soft margarines that are low in saturated and trans fats.
- Limit butter, hard margarine, lard and shortening.

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# What about other foods?

Follow Canada's Food Guide by eating the recommended amount and type of food each day.

People should also limit foods and beverages high in calories, fat, sugar or salt, such as:

- cakes and pastries
- chocolate and candies
- cookies and granola bars
- ice cream and frozen desserts
- doughnuts and muffins
- french fries
- potato chips, nachos and salty snacks
- alcohol
- fruit flavoured drinks
- soft drinks
- sports and energy drinks
- sweetened hot or cold drinks

## Instead of...

## Choose...

Soft drinks and other high-sugar beverages

Water, milk, or unsweetened fortified soy beverage

High-fat and sugar snacks and desserts like muffins, scones, cookies, doughnuts, pie, cake, ice cream, chips, candy, and chocolate

A variety of fruits, yogurt, fruit cups (packed in fruit juice), granola bars, baked chips, whole grain pretzels, or unsalted nuts

Fast food meals like burgers, hot dogs, fries, pizza, or fried chicken

Healthier entrées like chicken burgers, vegetarian pizza and wraps on whole wheat bread/crusts.

Sides like salads, fruit, or baked potatoes.

Note: Avoid adding gravy, bacon, butter.

For more tips, visit <http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/healthy-eating-sainealimentation/tips-conseils/eating-out-manger-exterieur-eng.php>

# Top 5 healthy snacks for children

1. Plain yogurt with any whole fresh fruit
2. Whole wheat toast with peanut butter and banana
3. Raw veggies (like carrots) with cheese
4. Handful of unsalted trail mix with glass of milk or unsweetened fortified soy beverage
5. Dried fruit like apricots or figs with cottage cheese



Special  
Olympics  
**Healthy  
Athletes**

# Fuelling with fluids

Staying hydrated ensures that your child can perform optimally in sport, school, and at home. Fluids play a critical role in our body, performing a variety of tasks, including:

- optimal body functioning on every level including cognition, digestion, muscular functions, and joint lubrication
- removal of waste products and transporting nutrients

In addition to daily fluid needs, hydration before, during, and after sport ensures optimal performance and prevents heat-related illness and injury. Have your child follow this three-step plan for optimal hydration around sport.

## STEP 1: PRE-HYDRATION PRIMER

Drink at least 1 to 2 cups (250 to 500 ml) of fluid approximately 1 to 2 hours before practice or competition.

## STEP 2: DURING-SPORT DRINKING

Encourage your child to drink at least 2 to 3 large gulps of fluid (water is best) every 15 to 20 minutes. This is especially important in the heat.

## STEP 3: POST-SPORT REFILL

Replacing fluids should be a top priority. Aim for a minimum of 1 to 2 cups (250 ml to 500 ml) of water or milk right away and in the hours following exercise.

### First place fluids

Water and milk are the best fluid choices. For variety, add orange, lemon, or cucumber slices to your water.

# Special dietary needs

Some children with intellectual disabilities may have additional dietary needs. The suggestions below will help optimize nutrition in some common nutrition-related health issues. Consult with your doctor and a registered dietitian before making dietary changes. Working with these professionals will provide an individualized plan that will meet your child's unique nutrition needs.

## Strategies for common nutrition-related health issues

### CONSTIPATION

- Increase intake of water, juice, and foods with high water content. For example, vegetables and fruit are approximately 90% water.
- Increase intake of foods that are high in fibre such as whole grain breads, crackers, and cereals; raw, cooked or dried fruits such as prunes; vegetables, and legumes such as beans, lentils, and split peas.
- Consider supplemental fibre products and consult your healthcare professional.

### DIARRHEA

- Short-term (acute) diarrhea can cause dehydration and electrolyte loss. Consider a rehydration drink and consult your healthcare professional.
- Long-term (chronic) diarrhea caused by medications or food intolerances can cause nutrient deficiencies. Consult your doctor and dietitian.

### UNDERWEIGHT

- Incorporate high-calorie snacks like milkshakes, trail mix, cheese, and granola.
- Add sauces, fats, and spreads to foods. For example, spread peanut butter on fruit and add salad dressings to veggies, margarine or oil to rice or pasta.
- Consider supplemental nutrition products and consult a healthcare professional.

### OVERWEIGHT

- Consult with your doctor and dietitian about healthy weight management. Children should not be placed on calorie-restricted diets while they are growing.
- The whole family should follow Canada's Food Guide, limit screen time and incorporate more daily physical activity.



## FEEDING PROBLEMS

- Certain behaviours such as avoiding certain foods due to colour, texture, or taste can result in decreased variety and increased risk of nutrient deficiencies. Consulting your doctor and dietitian and/or a behaviour analyst is recommended.
- Consider creating an interactive relationship with food by:
  - letting the young athlete help with food preparation;
  - talking about different foods: where they come from and their colours and textures;
  - having a tasting “party” to try new foods;
  - letting children shop for foods at the grocery store;
  - helping children plant a vegetable garden.
- Chewing and swallowing difficulties may limit the type and texture of foods that are safe for the child to eat. This may compromise overall nutrition and hydration status. Consulting with your doctor and dietitian and/or a swallowing specialist is recommended.

## Does my child need special dietary supplements?

Parents and caregivers are cautioned against using dietary supplements, including vitamins, herbs, and various pills and powders without first consulting a health care professional. Some supplements can produce medication interactions and may pose a health risk.

If a supplement claim sounds too good to be true, it often is. Supplements should not be used as a “crutch” for unhealthy eating habits. The best and highest quality source of vitamins and minerals is directly from the original source – food!

Visit [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca) to locate a Registered Dietitian in your area or ask your family physician for a referral.

# 10 healthy eating changes

Incorporating healthy eating is easier than you think. Try these 10 healthy eating changes to jump-start a healthy diet for your child and the entire family.

Instead of...	Try this healthy eating change...
Using food as a reward for good behaviour, to calm your child, or to coerce him/her to do something.	Reward with verbal praise or a hug. Start a “gold star” behaviour chart and reward with a visit to the movies or a trip to a favourite playground.
Allowing your child to eat and access food whenever and wherever he/she wants throughout the day.	Control access by having structured meal and snack times. Aim to eat every 3 to 4 hours. Any longer will cause hunger, which increases sweet cravings and overeating.
Preparing and eating meat every day.	Have meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu often. These foods provide a boost of fibre, less fats, and other nutrients.
Shopping for groceries when you run out, without a shopping list or meal plan.	Develop a daily meal schedule for your family. This will save you time and money. Create a grocery shopping list that complements the plan and stick to it, shopping regularly.
Buying foods that seem the quickest to prepare.	Read the nutrition information on packaged food before you buy them. Look at the Nutrition Facts table and at the ingredient list.
Making the same meals over and over again, which may create boredom and discourage variety.	Try a new recipe every two weeks. Start by using the recipes found in this guide. There are thousands of free recipes online as well as cookbooks with nutrient-dense, easy-to-prepare, delicious meals.

<b>Instead of...</b>	<b>Try this healthy eating change...</b>
Not including the child in grocery shopping or meal preparation.	Have your child actively help you grocery shop and prepare meals. Not only will this help to focus behavior, it teaches valuable skills and knowledge of healthy eating, which can help increase independence in adulthood.
Stocking your fridge with an endless variety of beverage choices.	Switch to water and milk as your primary fluid choices. Some juices, sport drinks, and colas are loaded with sugar and caffeine and can contribute to dental cavities and extra calories.
Serving adult-size portions and reprimanding the child if he/she does not finish the entire plate of food.	Serve portions that follow the child's needs from Canada's Food Guide. Allow your child to eat until he/she feels full, but emphasize that he/she must eat equally from each food group. Children are often great self-regulators of appetite. Remember that children who are tired or who have just exercised hard may not feel like eating right away.
Giving up on a food if your child initially refuses to eat it or not letting her/him try a new food.	Don't give up on certain foods. Palates and tastes change with time. Try serving the food at a different temperature, with different sauces or spices, and at different meals. Reinforce and reward when he/she makes an effort to try something new!

# Healthy eating activities

10 fun activities for children that focus on healthy nutrition based on Canada's Food Guide recommendations.

## My Food Guide Rainbow

What you will need:

- Copy of Canada's Food Guide [Canada.ca/FoodGuide](http://Canada.ca/FoodGuide)
- Paper and crayons or pencil crayons

### DIRECTIONS

1. Review Canada's Food Guide Rainbow describing how each colour represents a food group.

Review recommended daily servings from each group.

- Green = Vegetables and Fruit
- Yellow = Grain Products
- Blue = Milk and Alternatives
- Red = Meat and Alternatives

2. Have your child think about what their favourite foods are from each food group.

3. Using crayons and paper, have them create their own personal Food Guide rainbow by drawing favourite foods as they fit in each coloured food group.

4. Review the daily serving recommendations from each group and have them draw the number of servings from each group somewhere on the rainbow.

## Food Group Bingo

What you will need:

- Paper to create bingo cards
- Marker and ruler
- Food images from each of the four food groups and “other foods” - found online, in grocery store flyers, or stickers
- Items like beans to mark bingo cards
- A container to store the master bingo food images

### DIRECTIONS

1. Create a set of standard images to be used on bingo cards.
2. Using the four food groups and “other foods” as columns, create a set of bingo cards.
3. Print out the bingo boards and laminate if you wish.
4. Call out the food and food group and play as usual. This is a fun way to reinforce shape recognition and work on association of foods within the food groups.

## My Eat Well Plate

What you will need:

- Paper plates
- Crayons or pencil crayons
- Pen or marker
- Canada’s Food Guide ([Canada.ca/FoodGuide](http://Canada.ca/FoodGuide))

### DIRECTIONS

1. Using a pen or marker, divide a paper plate into four sections by drawing a cross through the centre.
2. Review each of the food groups found in Canada’s Food Guide. Remember: healthy, balanced meals include at least three choices but ideally four choices from each of the four food groups.
3. Have your child draw their favorite foods from the four food groups onto each section of the paper plate. Have them create separate plates for a “healthy” breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
4. At meal times, using real foods, have your child portion out their plate the same way. Repeating the food groups to which each food choice belongs.

## Name This Food

What you will need:

- Something to blindfold your child (e.g., scarf, bandana)
- About 20 different foods, including choices from each of the food groups (be cautious of all allergies)

### DIRECTIONS

1. Blindfold the athlete and have him/her identify the food through smell and touch. It may be an apple, or a cashew, or a pear.
2. Have them taste each healthy food and then guess what food it is.
3. Challenge them by having him/her guess which food group it belongs in.
4. Challenge them further by asking how many servings he/she needs per day from this group.

## My Healthy Body

What you will need:

- Large piece of parchment paper
- Crayons or pencil crayons
- Foods, pictures or food containers from each of the food groups plus fluids
- Examples of foods that work:
  - Vegetables and Fruit: use whole fresh fruits and veggies, canned fruit
  - Grain Products: use pasta (in package), rice in baggie, piece of bread
  - Milk and Alternatives: use empty yogurt containers or milk cartons
  - Meat and Alternatives: use a can of tuna, a box of frozen meat, and a can of beans
  - Fluids: use water bottles and milk containers
  - Include “other” food items: candy, soft drinks, chips, doughnuts

### DIRECTIONS

1. Have your child lie down on the parchment paper and trace the outline of his/her body.
2. At this point, he/she can get creative and try to draw more distinct features of himself such as eyes, ears, and T-shirt.
3. Using the foods from each of the groups, ask him/her to guess what parts of the body each food group nourishes.
4. Every time an “other” food item is selected, explain that it doesn’t perform a healthy function.

## Food Group Art

What you will need:

- Paper
- Paint and paint brush
- Glue and/or tape
- Foods from the four food groups to be used for stamping or gluing to paper.

Foods that work well include:

- Dried veggies and fruit
- Pasta or rice
- Beans and nuts
- Processed cheese slices

*NOTE: Grocery store flyers are a good source of pictures of foods.*

### DIRECTIONS

1. Working with your child, select one or two foods from each of the four food groups, ensuring that he/she can identify each of them within their respective group.
2. Using a paintbrush, brush the surface of the food or dip the food in the paint.
3. Use the food to make creative prints on the paper. You can also choose to glue foods or food pictures to the paper.
4. Get creative! The only rule is that the final food art creation has to include a food from each of the four food groups.

## Seedling Planter Box

What you will need:

- 1L or 2L milk cartons - one for each planter box
- Scissors
- Pen
- Popsicle stick - one for each planter box
- Herbs or vegetable seeds of your choice
- Potting soil

### DIRECTIONS

1. Cut the milk carton down to about 10 cm high.
2. Cut three or four small slits in the bottom for drainage.
3. Add potting soil and seeds.
4. Write the name of the plant on the popsicle stick and place in the soil as a plant marker.

## Restaurant: How to choose healthy foods when eating out

What you will need:

- Any menu with pictures (or have your young athlete make his/her own menus)
- Use pictures of foods in flyers from your local grocery store or old magazines
- Glue
- Paper plate or toy plate
- Disposable cup or toy cup
- Napkins
- Toy cutlery, if available

*Reference: [www.atozteacherstuff.com](http://www.atozteacherstuff.com)*

### DIRECTIONS

1. Use menu provided or have him/her make menus with pictures of vegetables and dinners from flyers or magazines.
2. Help him/her to set up a play kitchen and restaurant area with play food or pictures of food.
3. Encourage him/her to set the table with a plate, cup, napkin, and toy cutlery, if available.
4. Encourage him/her to take turns being the server, cook, and customer. Encourage him/her to order foods from the different food groups.

This can be a great opportunity to teach proper table manners such as sitting down at the table to eat, not talking with food in his/her mouth (to decrease risk of choking), and not taking food from someone else's plate unless invited to do so.



## Give Me 5! Learning about the Vegetables and Fruit Group

What you will need:

- Pictures of foods found in flyers from your local grocery store or old magazines
- Construction paper
- Crayons
- Pencils
- Optional: sample of real vegetables and fruit. If possible, include less well-known vegetables and fruits such as kiwi fruit and eggplant.

### DIRECTIONS

1. Ask your child where vegetables and fruit come from:
  - Some grow on trees; for example, oranges, apples, bananas
  - Some grow in the ground; for example, potatoes, beets, carrots
  - Some grow on vines or plants; for example, peas, corn, melons
2. Ask them to show you with his/her fingers the minimum number of vegetable and fruit servings needed each day. The answer would be four servings (fingers) for two to three year-olds, five servings (fingers) for four to eight-year olds, and six servings (fingers) for nine to 13 year-olds.
3. Show pictures of vegetables and fruit or display the real thing.
  - Discussion questions:
    - What is this food?
    - Have you tried this food?
    - Why is it good to eat many different kinds of vegetables and fruit?
  - Sample Answers:
    - It gives us different tastes and textures.
    - It lets us explore new foods.
    - It provides the many nutrients our body needs.
4. Pass out construction paper. Have him/her trace her hand with a pencil to make a food tree remembering that he/she may need assistance.
5. In each branch of the tree, have him/her write about or draw a favourite fruit or vegetable.

*Reference: [www.atozteacherstuff.com](http://www.atozteacherstuff.com)*

# Mealtime games that keep kids at the table

## I Spy

- The parent/caregiver says: “I spy with my little eye, something that is orange and crunchy.”
- Instruct your child that instead of answering with a word, like carrot, he/she is to take a bite of the answer.
- The first person to take a bite (and chew and swallow) goes next.

## Lucky Vegetables

- Children roll a die and must eat that number of bites of a vegetable. The winner is the first person to finish his/her vegetables.

## Goober Goat

- One child starts with a farm-related word. Each comes up with a new word linked to the last. “Corn,” for example, might be followed by “bread,” “oven,” or “refrigerator.” See how far from the farm they can get.

## Counting Moo

- Children count off around a table, replacing even numbers with the word “moo.” If you mess up, you have to drink your milk.

*Reference:*

*Games to Get Your Kids Eating Healthy*

[www.hubpages.com](http://www.hubpages.com)

[www.familyfun.go.com](http://www.familyfun.go.com)

# Recipes

## Balance bowl

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 chicken breasts
- 12 oz chopped Butternut squash (about 2 ½ cups)
- 1 tablespoon + 2 teaspoons coconut oil
- 6 cups mixed greens (spinach, kale etc.)
- 1 avocado, chopped
- ¼ cup tahini
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 3 tablespoons water
- A pinch of salt
- A pinch of pepper
- A pinch of garlic powder

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place butternut squash on a baking sheet. Toss with 2 teaspoons of melted coconut oil, ½ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper & ¼ teaspoon garlic powder. Roast in the oven for 25 minutes, tossing around half way through.

Take your chicken and sprinkle both sides with salt, pepper and garlic powder. Place a large saute pan over medium high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of coconut oil and let heat up for about 30 seconds. Then add chicken and cook for 3-4 minutes on each side depending on how thick they are (if they are thick, pounding them down a bit so they all have even thickness). Set chicken aside.

In a small bowl combine tahini, lemon juice, apple cider vinegar, water, ½ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper & ¼ teaspoon garlic powder. Toss a couple of tablespoons of dressing over the greens in a large bowl until evenly coated.

To assemble bowl add lettuce and top with butternut squash, chopped chicken and avocado pieces. Drizzle more tahini dressing on top and enjoy!

# Banana oatmeal protein pancakes

*Prep time: 5 mins*

*Cook time: 10 mins*

*Total time: 15 mins*

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium ripe banana
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup oats
- ¼ tsp cinnamon

## DIRECTIONS

1. Put the banana in a bowl and mash with a fork.
2. Add the eggs and mix until well combined.
3. Put the oats in a blender and blend until fine.
4. Add the blended oats and cinnamon to the banana mix, and stir well.
5. Heat a skillet over a medium heat with a dash of vegetable oil.
6. Pour ¼ cup of the mixture into the skillet, cook on one side for about 1.5 minutes, then turn and cook on the other side for about 1 minute (or until golden brown on both sides).
7. Serve (with or without maple syrup or super easy chia jam) and enjoy.

# Bell pepper pizza

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 large green bell pepper
- 1/4 cup tomato sauce
- 1/4 cup grated cheese
- A pinch of red pepper flakes
- A pinch of basil or parsley
- As many veggie toppings as you can fit! Mushrooms? Broccoli? Spinach? Pineapple? Be creative!
- Add a protein! Grilled chicken? Chopped sausage? Chickpeas?

## DIRECTIONS

1. Pre-heat your oven or toaster oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. Slice off each of the four sides of your pepper and lay flat on a baking sheet.
3. Top with sauce, then cheese, followed by any and every veggie in your crisper!
4. Bake for 10 minutes, flipping your oven to broil towards the end to make the cheese nice and bubbly.
5. Add a pinch of red pepper flakes and basil/parsley if desired and dig in!

# Chicken and avocado burritos

*Prep time: 15 minutes*

*Cook time: 5 minutes*

*Total time: 20 minutes*

*Makes 4 servings*

## INGREDIENTS

- 4 burrito sized tortillas (corn tortillas for gluten-free), warmed
- 1 pound cooked chicken, sliced or shredded (OR try beans if you are a vegetarian).
- 1 large avocado, diced
- 1 cup Monterey Jack cheese, shredded
- 1/4 cup salsa verde
- 1/4 cup greek yogurt (instead of sour cream!)
- 2 tablespoons cilantro, chopped
- Add stripes of bell peppers! Get creative! What other veggies can you include?

## DIRECTIONS

Assemble the burritos, optionally toast, and enjoy!

# Chocolate dipped almond butter banana bites

## INGREDIENTS

- 3 large bananas
- 1/3 cup nut butter of choice
- 1/2 cup melted chocolate of choice

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Slice bananas into slices about 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick.
2. Spread a little nut butter onto a slice and sandwich two slices together.
3. Place on wax paper on a cookie sheet and freeze until solid, at least an hour.
4. Melt chocolate in a double boiler and remove frozen banana bites from freezer.
5. Dip each banana bite in chocolate and place back on wax paper. Freeze for another hour.
6. Transfer and keep in an airtight container in the freezer for up to two weeks.

# Curried sweet potato bowl

*Prep time: 20 mins*

*Cook time: 20 mins*

*Makes 2 servings*

## INGREDIENTS

For the sweet potatoes:

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into bite-sized pieces

For the spinach:

- 1 tsp olive
- 1 clove garlic, finely minced
- Pinch red pepper flakes
- Pinch of salt
- 4 cups fresh baby spinach

For the bowls

- 2 cups cooked pearl barley or your favourite grain
- 4 poached eggs
- Salt and pepper

## INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 425°. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, whisk together the olive oil, curry powder, garlic powder, and salt. Add in the sweet potatoes and toss to coat. Spread the sweet potatoes out in one layer on a baking sheet. Bake in preheated oven for 15-20 minutes, or until they are tender and golden brown.

Meanwhile, prepare the spinach by cooking it in the olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Add in the garlic and red pepper flakes. Cook until the garlic is tender. Add in the spinach, add pinch of salt, and toss to coat in the olive oil. Saute until the spinach is wilted. To assemble the bowls, place the sweet potatoes and spinach on top of a bed of the barely. Then top with two runny poached eggs. Top with fresh cracked pepper and salt.



# Frozen yogurt bites

## INGREDIENTS

- Mini muffin tin (or other container)
- Mini muffin tin liners
- Granola
- Yogurt
- Fruit

## DIRECTIONS

1. Place the liners in the muffin tin.
2. Add healthy granola cereal to the bottom of the cups.
3. Fill almost to the top of the liner with your favorite Greek yogurt (Watch out and check the label for sneaky added sugars!).
4. Place a few pieces of fruit in the top of the yogurt.
5. Freeze in the freezer for up to 3 hours or until the Yogurt Bites are frozen.
6. Remove from liners and serve immediately.
7. Will store in the freezer for up to 3 weeks.

# No-cook snack ideas

## Give Me Protein Snack Box

*What's in this snack: 2 hardboiled eggs, 4 oz. deli turkey, 1 oz cheese, 1 cup celery sticks with 1 Tbsp. peanut butter*  
*Portion Fix containers: 1 green, 2 red, 1 blue, 3 tsp.*



## Fruits and Nuts Snack Box

*What's in this snack: ¾ cup plain 1% Greek yogurt mixed with 1 tsp. honey and ½ tsp. cinnamon, ½ cup strawberries, ½ cup nectarine or orange wedges, ½ cup green grapes, 12 raw almonds*  
*Portion Fix containers: 1 red, 1 ½ purple, 1 blue*

## Easy Roast Beef Pinwheels

*What's in this snack: ¼ cup goat cheese, 4 oz. sliced roast beef, ½ cup spinach rolled up in 1 6-inch whole wheat tortilla and sliced into pinwheels, ½ cup cherry tomatoes, 1 kiwi (or plum, or small tangerine)*

*Portion Fix containers: 1 blue, 1 red, 1 green, 1 yellow, 1 purple*



## Chips and Dips Snack Box

*What's in this snack: ½ cup baked corn tortilla chips (or these home-made tortilla chips made from 2 corn tortillas), ¼ cup guacamole, ¼ cup pico de gallo, ¾ cup bell pepper sticks, ½ cup pineapple cubes*  
*Portion Fix containers: 1 yellow, 1 blue, 1 green, ½ purple*

## No-Cook Snacks for the Sweet Tooth

*What's in this snack: 1 cup raspberries (or blueberries), 4 chocolate or plain Graham crackers (1 sheet), 1 Tbsp. cacao nibs mixed with 2 Tbsp. unsweetened coconut flakes*  
*Portion Fix containers: 1 purple, 1 yellow, 1 blue, 3 tsp.*



# Super easy chia jam

*Makes 1 1/2 to 2 cups*

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups chopped fruit
- 1 to 2 tablespoons lemon juice, to taste
- 1 to 2 tablespoons honey, agave, maple syrup, or sugar, to taste
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds, plus more if needed

## EQUIPMENT

- Measuring cups and spoons
- Spatula
- Saucepan
- Potato masher, optional
- Glass jars or other storage containers, for the finished jam

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Prepare the fruit as needed: Remove stems, pits, seeds, and skin, as needed. Chop large fruits into small pieces. Berries can be left whole.
2. Cook the fruit until it starts to break down: Transfer the fruit to a saucepan and set over medium heat. Cook until the fruit breaks down and becomes syrupy, 5 to 10 minutes. Mash the fruit with the back of a spatula or a potato masher, leaving it as smooth or as lumpy as you like.
3. Stir in the honey and lemon juice: Off the heat, stir in 1 tablespoon of the honey and lemon juice. Taste and add more honey or lemon juice to taste.
4. Stir in the chia seeds.
5. Let stand 5 minutes, until thickened: This won't quite reach the firm consistency of regular jam, but it will noticeably thicken. If you'd like a thicker consistency, especially with very juicy fruits, stir in more chia seeds 1 teaspoon at a time.

# Thai peanut power bowl

*Prep time: 25 mins*

*Cook time: 15 mins*

*Makes 3-4 servings*

## INGREDIENTS

For the bowl:

- 6 oz. spaghetti of your choice
- 1 tsp. extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup cucumber, cubed
- 1 bell pepper, diced
- 3 green onions, chopped
- 2 large carrots, peeled
- ¾ cup shelled edamame beans (if frozen, thaw first)
- ½ cup cilantro, roughly chopped
- ½ cup alfalfa sprouts
- 1 avocado, sliced
- sesame seeds, for garnish

For the sauce:

- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 2 Tbsp. toasted sesame oil
- 2 Tbsp. natural peanut butter
- 2 tsp. minced ginger
- 3 Tbsp. lime juice
- 2 Tbsp. tamari



# Grocery store list

Shopping at the grocery store can sometimes be a big task. With all the choices of food it can be confusing to know which ones to buy and which ones to stay away from.

## NUTRITION CHALLENGE

Look up a healthy recipe and take a trip to the grocery store to buy the ingredients with your family.

### TIPS

#### Make a list beforehand and stick to it

This will help you avoid walking through every aisle and buying things just because they look good.

#### Try to stick to the outer edges of the store

All the fresh food and produce is usually on the outer edges of the store, so try and avoid the middle aisles. This will also keep you from buying junk food.

## Here is a sample list of great ingredients for active people:

### FRUITS

- Apples
- Bananas
- Berries
- Cantaloupe
- Grapes
- Kiwi
- Oranges
- Strawberries
- 100% fruit juice/boxes
- Canned fruit (in its own juice)
- Dried fruit
- Raisins
- Frozen fruits

### VEGETABLES

- Asparagus
- Broccoli
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Green beans
- Peppers
- Any dark greens
- Frozen stir fry
- Frozen vegetables
- Salad mix
- Potatoes
- Sweet potatoes

**DAIRY**

- Cottage cheese
- Low-fat cheese (cubed cheese, cheese slices, or string cheese)
- Low-fat or skim milk
- Low-fat yogurt
- Pudding

**PROTEIN**

- Beans (kidney, black, pinto, or soy)
- Chicken Breasts (boneless and skinless)
- Deli meat
- Eggs
- Fish (frozen or fresh)
- Ground beef (80-90% lean)
- Tuna (water packed)
- Peanut butter
- Nuts

**GRAINS**

- Brown, wild, white rice
- Graham crackers
- Granola and cereal bars
- Frozen whole grain toaster waffles
- Oatmeal
- Pasta
- Popcorn
- Whole grain bread
- Whole grain cereal
- Whole grain crackers

**DESSERTS AND SNACKS**

- Fig bar cookies
- Frozen fruit juice bars
- Frozen yogurt bars
- Oatmeal cookies
- Peanut butter with crackers
- Sherbet or frozen yogurt

# Healthy shopping list

## VEGETABLES

Lettuce	Onions
Asparagus	Broccoli
Green beans	Corn
Cauliflower	Carrots
Tomatoes	Peppers (red, green, yellow, or orange)
Potatoes	Celery
Spinach	

## FRUITS

Oranges	Mangoes
Apples	Pineapples
Bananas	Nectarines
Strawberries	Cherries
Blueberries	Lemons/Limes
Raspberries	Applesauce
Blackberries	

## MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES

Fish fillets	Frozen shrimp
Chicken breasts	Tuna (canned in water)
Lean beef for stir fry	Beans (any type)
Lean ground beef	Tofu
Hummus	Unsalted nuts

## GRAIN PRODUCTS

Whole wheat bread	Crackers (4g of fibre or more)
English muffins	Pancake mix
Bagels	Brown rice
Tortillas	Whole wheat pasta
Cereal	

## CONDIMENTS AND DRINKS

Mustard	Maple Syrup Honey
Peanut butter	Water
Jam (fruit jam)	Milk

## MILK AND ALTERNATIVES

Cheddar cheese	Skim or 1% milk
Cottage cheese	Unsweetened, fortified soy beverage
Low-fat yogurt	

### TIPS:

- Don't get stuck in a fruit and vegetable rut; eat different types every day!
- Pick fruits and vegetables that are portable for snacks at school and after sport.
- Use the lower fat versions of cheese with less than 20% milk fat (MF) on the label.
- Look for "high fibre" cereal (4 g or more fibre per serving)
- Look for "low-fat" granola bars and crackers (less than 3 g fat per serving)
- Have meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu often.
- Select lean meat and alternatives prepared with little or no added fat or salt.



# Sample menus

## BREAKFAST

- Blueberry pancakes with light syrup
- Turkey sausage
- Cantaloupe
- Low-fat or skim milk

## LUNCH

- Beef vegetable soup
- Whole grain crackers
- Green peppers, carrots, and cherry tomatoes dipped in fat-free dressing
- Water

## SNACK

- Celery with peanut butter
- Low-fat milk

## DINNER

- Salmon
- Dinner roll
- Sweet potato
- Carrot, broccoli, cauliflower mix
- Pears
- Water

## SNACK

- Oatmeal cookies
- Low-fat milk

# More resources

Nutrition can often seem confusing at first glance, but there are many tools out there that can help.

Dietitians are a great resource, whether you want to go see one to get tips about ways to improve your diet or you just have a simple question. There are also many websites and additional sources that have great information about nutrition.

## **Special Olympics BC**

Nutrition Resources

[www.specialolympics.bc.ca/healthy-athletes-resources](http://www.specialolympics.bc.ca/healthy-athletes-resources)

## **Special Olympics – Healthy Athlete Resources**

Are You A Healthy Athlete? is a booklet designed to enhance participation in Healthy Athletes® screenings held during Special Olympics competitions.

[www.specialolympics.org/healthy\\_athletes\\_resources.aspx](http://www.specialolympics.org/healthy_athletes_resources.aspx)

## **Special Olympics Ontario**

Physical Activity Healthy Living (PAHL) Nutrition Guide

[pahl.specialolympicsontario.ca/pahl-nutrition-guide](http://pahl.specialolympicsontario.ca/pahl-nutrition-guide)

## **Healthy Families BC**

<https://www.healthyfamiliesbc.ca/eating>

## **Eat Right.org**

[www.eatright.org/Public/](http://www.eatright.org/Public/)

## **HealthLink BC's Dietitian Services**

[www.HealthLinkBC.ca](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca)

## **Dietitians of Canada**

[www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)

**Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide**

[Canada.ca/FoodGuide](http://Canada.ca/FoodGuide)

**Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide – First Nations, Inuit, and Metis**

[Canada.ca/FoodGuide](http://Canada.ca/FoodGuide)

**Brand Name Food List**

[www.brandnamefoodlist.ca](http://www.brandnamefoodlist.ca)

**Canadian Diabetes Association**

[www.diabetes.ca](http://www.diabetes.ca)

**Canada's Physical Activity Guide for Healthy Living**

[www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide)

**Healthier Foods: How to Make Fun-Fast-Foods Healthier for Students Fact Sheet**

[www.healthyeatingatschool.ca/category/resources](http://www.healthyeatingatschool.ca/category/resources)

**Sip Smart! BC**

[www.bcpeds.ca/sipsmart](http://www.bcpeds.ca/sipsmart)

**Stay Active, Eat Healthy**

[www.stayactiveeathealthy.ca](http://www.stayactiveeathealthy.ca)

**Health Canada's Healthy Canadians**

<http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/index-eng.php>

**Health Canada's Food and Nutrition Page**

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/index-eng.php>

**USDA Choose My Plate**

[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

**My Pyramid.gov**

[www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)

**Diabetes Exercise and Sports Association**

[www.diabetes-exercise.org](http://www.diabetes-exercise.org)

**Celiac Sprue Association**

[www.csaceliacs.org/recipes.php](http://www.csaceliacs.org/recipes.php)

**The Vegetarian Resource Group (VRG)**

[www.vrg.org/nutrition/](http://www.vrg.org/nutrition/)

**Down Syndrome Nutrition Handbook - A Guide to Promoting Healthy Lifestyles. (2002)**

By: Joan G. Medlin, RD.

[www.downsyndromenutrition.com/tools/books/78-down-syndrome-nutrition-handbook](http://www.downsyndromenutrition.com/tools/books/78-down-syndrome-nutrition-handbook)

**Nutrition Focus Newsletter for Children with Special Health Care Needs. Center on Human Development and Disability**

University of Washington

(206) 685-1297; Fax: (206) 543-5771

**Nutrition Interventions for Children with Special Health Care Needs (2002)**

Washington State Health Department

[www.depts.washington.edu/cshcnut](http://www.depts.washington.edu/cshcnut)

# Source material

Content in this section derived from:

- “Healthy eating, healthy you!” Special Olympics BC healthy diet guide developed by Morgan Hunter and Dr. Sally Willis-Stewart, 2014
- Special Olympics Canada Young Athlete Nutrition Guide, 2nd edition (2016), developed by Jennifer Gibson, MSc., RD, Contract Dietitian
- Special Olympics International TRAIN @ Home Nutrition Guide
- Special Olympics BC staff

A close-up photograph of water being poured into a clear glass. The water is captured in motion, creating a dynamic splash and numerous bubbles of various sizes. The lighting is bright and clean, highlighting the clarity and texture of the water. The word "HYDRATION" is overlaid in a bold, teal font across the center of the image.

# HYDRATION

# Hydration for recreational and physical activities

The Department of Health recommends that adults should aim to be active daily. Over a week, activity should add up to at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate intensity activity in bouts of 10 minutes or more (e.g. 30 minutes of activity at least 5 days a week)<sup>1</sup>.

This fact sheet explains hydration requirements for people carrying out moderate-intensity physical activity. These are activities which are recreational, for example related to hobbies or social interests. For hydration advice on high intensity activity lasting over 1 hour see 'Hydration & Exercise' fact sheet.

## What counts as moderate-intensity physical activity?

This is physical activity that is carried out in daily life where extra effort is required to perform the activity or exercise. Moderate intensity physical activity will increase the heart rate and rate of breathing. A good way to tell if you're working at this level of intensity is if you can still talk, but you can't sing the words to a song!

Activities can include the following:

- Gardening
- Brisk walking
- Walking a dog
- Hiking / hill walking - Dancing
- Skateboarding
- Rollerblading
- Volleyball, basketball
- Housework and domestic chores
- Active involvement in games and sports with children
- DIY such as painting, building, roofing
- Carrying / moving moderate load (<20kg)
- While it is clear that exercise may alter hydration requirements, the importance of staying hydrated when undertaking these kinds of physical and recreational activities often gets overlooked.

# Hydration requirements

Hydration requirements vary depending on the activity carried out. Basic guidelines advise that women should drink about 1.6 litres of fluid and men around 2.0 litres of fluid per day. This is the equivalent to about eight 200ml glasses for a woman and ten 200ml glasses for a man<sup>3</sup>, which ideally should be sipped at regular intervals throughout the day.

## Factors affecting hydration levels

Every individual is different and the amount of water needed to hydrate varies from person to person. On a day-to-day basis there are many factors that can affect an individual's need for water, such as age, gender, body mass, physical activity levels and climate.

When undertaking physical activities, you should consider the frequency, intensity and duration to ensure you are adequately hydrated. For example dance is a physical activity that can be carried out over long time periods, sometimes for several hours, in warm, enclosed environments. For these reasons, you should think about your hydration needs to ensure maximum enjoyment of the activity while preventing signs of poor hydration.

It is also important to think about the climate (temperature, humidity, altitude). Environmental factors may also change over time. For example, if you are going hill walking it may be warm at the early stages of the walk, yet cold and windy towards the top of the hill. Safety issues such as rugged terrains may also limit the amount of fluid that you consume as it may be too dangerous to stop for a drink.

Careful planning can help you to perform at your very best. In the case of hill walking, make sure you carry water with you and plan stops en route where you know it is safe to break for a drink. The table below summarises key factors that can influence an individual's water requirements.

### FACTORS THAT CAN INFLUENCE WATER REQUIREMENTS:

- Duration of activity
- Intensity of activity
- Sweat rates
- Temperature of environment
- Altitude (higher altitude increases breathing and loss of water)



# When to hydrate

It is important to be well hydrated before starting physical activities, and once activities have begun, water should ideally be sipped at regular intervals, approximately every 20 minutes or so. This is especially important in hot weather or at high altitudes.

As physical activities often immerse people in what they are doing it can be easy to forget to drink, or you may not realise it is necessary, so having little breaks or easy access to fluid is advisable. For most people, water is adequate and it hydrates without containing sugar, calories or additives, so packing a bottle of water is a good idea.

It is also important to rehydrate after physical activities. This is best achieved by sipping at intervals, rather than gulping large amounts at a time, and again for most people water will adequately rehydrate you.

# Why is hydration important?

Being poorly hydrated may have a negative impact on your performance, your reaction times and you might get tired more easily. This may especially be the case in hot, humid conditions or when recreational activities are prolonged. Some side-effects linked to poor hydration status during recreational activities are listed below.

- risk of heat illness
- heart rate
- feelings of effort
- performance
- mental function
- ability to regulate body temperature
- development of headaches, nausea

Some recent studies have also shown that people carrying out physical activity can lose significant amounts of weight, which can impact on performance. For example, in controlled studies, a 2 % loss of body mass, i.e. 1.4kg for a 70kg adult, can result in around a 20 per cent decrease in performance levels in a temperate climate and up to a 40 per cent decrease in hot temperatures. Recommendations for mountaineers at high altitude suggest that approximately 4-6 litres of fluid are required per day.

The simple tips shown below help to summarise why maintaining adequate hydration levels is important when carrying out physical activity, enabling these activities to be enjoyed to their utmost.

### Six tips for healthy hydration

1. For most people participating in physical activities, water will rehydrate you adequately without adding sugar, calories or additives into your diet.
2. Perform at your best and pack a bottle of water with the rest of your gear.
3. Sip water in small amounts before, during and after the activity.
4. Replenish water regularly especially when your sweat rates are high; you are in hot and humid conditions; or at altitude.
5. An easy way to monitor changes in hydration status is to check the colour of your urine. This should be pale straw colour - anything darker and more fluid is needed.
6. Every 1 litre of water is equivalent to 1kg of weight. Weighing yourself before and after the recreational activity is a good way of judging water requirements, as a loss of 0.5kg is the equivalent to a loss of around 500ml of water.

# Why we need water

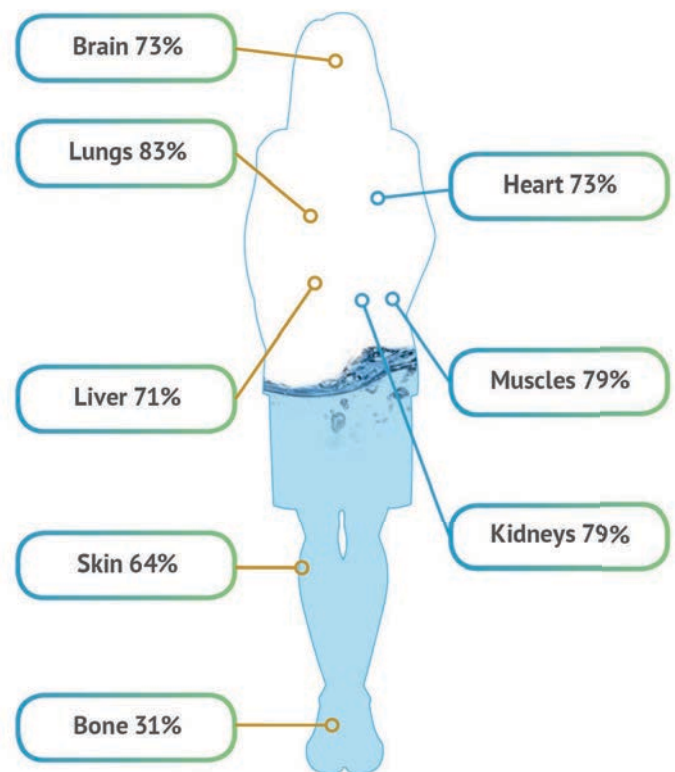
Water is essential for life. It accounts for about 60% of our body weight and performs crucial roles such as carrying nutrients and waste products between our major organs, helping to regulate body temperature, lubricating our joints and acting as a shock absorber.

Body water is found both inside cells, and is called, intracellular water. Intracellular water contains dissolved solutes (electrolytes) which are essential to maintaining healthy body functions. Water found outside cells is called extracellular water. Blood contains extracellular water which is transported around our body. Water moves easily between cells to wherever it is needed.

The human body works to maintain optimal hydration by using hormones to control how much we urinate and giving our brains signals to tell us that we are thirsty. As our brains are 73% water, insufficient hydration can have an adverse effect on how our brains function. On average, we take in and excrete around two and a half litres of water a day, although this varies from person to person.

## Average water content is 60% in adults

The body is comprised of between 50-75% water, depending on a person's age and gender. In adults body water = 60%.



# States of hydration

Hydration status may fluctuate throughout the day; however, our body will regulate itself over a 24-hour period.

Optimal hydration is when our water intake matches requirements. However, when water intake is less than our bodies' requirements, we start to become 'hypo-hydrated' and this can lead to insufficient hydration, or 'dehydration'.

We are at the greatest risk of dehydration when we are too hot or too dry, have limited access to water or lose more water than usual. Warm or dry environments, such as centrally-heated homes tend to increase our need for fluid. We can lose more fluid through sweating (due to exercise or hot climates), or by suffering vomiting and diarrhea.

## Consequences of insufficient hydration

Mild dehydration may occur when we lose about 1 per cent of our body weight due to water restriction. Some common symptoms of mild to moderate dehydration are given below:

- Constipation
- Dark yellow or brown urine
- Dry, sticky mouth
- Few or no tears when crying
- Headache
- Increased thirst
- Muscle tiredness
- Sleepiness or tiredness
- Children may be less active than usual

Research shows that losses of 2% or more can reduce cognitive (mental) performance. Inadequate water intake can also contribute to chronic kidney diseases.

Elderly people in particular are at increased risk of dehydration, due to a number of factors. The thirst sensation lessens with age, while using multiple drugs and medicines can also affect water balance which means they might become dehydrated more easily or without realising. It can be difficult for elderly people to physically reach or handle drinks and some actively restrict the amount they drink due to worries about not reaching the toilet on time.

Persistent dehydration can lead to confusion and even hospitalisation unless dealt with promptly, therefore, health professionals and caregivers should encourage the elderly to drink fluid at regular intervals throughout the day.

## Thirst and urine colour

Thirst is one of the indicators of hydration status. The body's fluid balance itself is regulated by thirst sensations, and fluid and salt concentrations, hormones and nerve signalling pathways all have important roles to play in this. For these reasons healthy individuals often receive advice from health professionals to “drink to thirst”. However, it should be recognised that age and whether we are healthy can affect how much we can rely on thirst.

Another indicator of whether we are adequately hydrated is urine colour. As a general rule of thumb, if you are healthy and well-hydrated the urine will tend to be straw-coloured, and becomes progressively darker the more dehydrated we become. Once it becomes honey-coloured this is a sign that not enough water has been drunk. Urine that is dark brown in colour can indicate severe dehydration. Please note, certain medications and foods, such as beet-root, may change the colour of your urine. If urine colour remains dark after increasing water intakes, medical advice should always be sought.

## How much water do we need?

Like vitamins and minerals, our fluid requirements are individual and depend on factors such as body weight and size, age and gender, levels of physical activity and the temperature of our environment. European guidelines, however, provide a useful insight into how much water our bodies need each day.

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) states that water contributes to the maintenance of normal physical and cognitive functions and normal thermoregulation.

Gender	Age Group	Amount of fluid from drinks and food (litres/day) <sup>2</sup>	Amount of fluid from drinks only (litres/day) <sup>1</sup>
Boys and girls	4 to 8 years	1.6	1.1 – 1.3
Girls	9 to 13 years	1.9	1.3 – 1.5
Boys	9 to 13 years	2.1	1.5 – 1.7
Women	14 years +	2.0	1.4 – 1.6
Men	14 years +	2.5	1.75 – 2.0

Remember, these guidelines include water from beverage and food sources. Ideally 70-80% of this should come from drinks and 20-30% from foods. Food with a high water content; such as melon, soups and stews, will make the greatest contribution to overall water intake. As hydration levels fluctuate during the day, it is advisable to sip water regularly throughout the day.

# Hydration for athletes

For people participating in high intensity exercise, it is possible to reach a state of over hydration if you consume too much fluid in a short period of time. In extreme cases this can cause a condition known as hyponatraemia, but, this is very rare. If you are starting to feel inspired to participate in sporting activities, it is important to remember to keep well hydrated. This is especially the case during the summer months and in warm environments, for example in hotter climates, poorly ventilated gyms or sports halls.

Drinking water before, during and after exercise helps us to work out more efficiently and for longer, and while sports drinks have a role to play, particularly for elite level endurance athletes, they are often used inappropriately by the rest of us as recreational drinks, which adds unnecessary calorific intake to our diet.

## GLOSSARY OF MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY

- Hypo-hydrated = water intake is less than body's requirements. This can lead to poor hydration or dehydration.
- Hyper-hydrated = water intake is more than body's requirements. This is also known as over-hydration.
- Hyponatremia = low sodium levels in the blood plasma.
- Hypernatremia = high sodium levels in the blood plasma.

## Type of exercise

Much research has been done on aerobic endurance activities such as long-distance running, cycling and swimming. In one study, the effects of being dehydrated versus hydrated was studied in runners exercising in the heat. Running times were found to be slower and gut temperature (a marker of core body temperature) higher when runners were dehydrated.

Less is known about the effects of dehydration on power/strength exercises, such as body-building, but a new study gives some insight into this. Seven men taking part in the research completed training regimes while they were hydrated or dehydrated. The findings showed that power performance, for example jumping height, was significantly reduced when the men were dehydrated.

There is also some evidence that inadequate hydration can adversely effect hormonal and metabolic responses such as how we burn carbohydrate and fat when doing resistance exercises. This could have implications for performance or weight management.

## Top tips for healthy hydration

- The elderly and children are more at risk of dehydration since they are not always regulating their water intake properly.
- While you can meet your body's water requirements from other drinks, water is one of the healthiest ways to hydrate as it has no calories or sugar.
- Foods can also contribute to your daily water intake. Those with a high water content; for example melon, soups, stews, fruit and vegetables, will make the greatest contribution.
- Make sure you always have access to water, even when you are out and about.
- You may need to drink more water when you exercise or spend time in hot and dry environments.
- Drink at regular intervals throughout the day, in order to meet your body's water requirements.

## The role of sports drinks

Sports drinks come in several different forms: 'energy' or 'power drinks' that provide calories, sugars and salts or 'isotonic drinks' that are more dilute and contain less energy but extra salts. For mild to moderate exercise including swimming, golf and walking, and for any physical activity lasting less than 1 hour, water will rehydrate you adequately. Isotonic drinks may be appropriate if you are carrying out high-intensity physical activity, such as marathon running, competitive cycling or tennis, etc., for more than 1 hour.

In June 2011, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) completed their assessment on sports drinks, and concluded that "the target population for sports drinks are active individuals performing endurance exercise."

# STAY HYDRATED!

SUN								
MON								
TUE								
WED								
THU								
FRI								
SAT								



# Educational information about hydration for children

Children are at a greater risk of dehydration than adults as they have higher water requirements in relation to their body weight.

While adults generally have good access to supplies of water, for children this is not always as easy. Children usually have to ask to be provided with water; often relying on their caregivers to provide drinks.

In addition, children don't always recognise the early stages of thirst, which can make them particularly vulnerable to becoming dehydrated, especially during times that can drive up their body fluid losses, for example when they are playing sports or during warm weather.

This factsheet sets out to explain why water consumption is important in childhood. It also reviews the latest hydration guidelines, scientific evidence and provides some top tips to help children stay hydrated.

## CHILDREN'S CURRENT HYDRATION HABITS

Water requirements are related to the rate at which food energy is metabolised by the body. Energy metabolism is higher per kilogram body weight in children than in adults, and is much higher in boys who are going through puberty. Consequently, children need to drink more water in relation to their body size than adults do. It is for these very reasons that children need to keep topped up with fluids throughout the day.

In a recent 14-day water consumption survey of 164 children aged 11-12 years, only 6.1% drank water in the morning or sipped water during the day. Most (24.4%) drank water at lunchtime or in the afternoon (33.5%), indicating that children may not drink enough water in the morning.

A French study found that more than two-thirds of children aged 9-11 years were inadequately hydrated when they went to school in the morning by assessing their hydration status from urine samples. The amount of fluid ingested at breakfast time was found to be inadequate in terms of being able to maintain suitable hydration levels for the morning period. This could have broader implications for learning, as discussed later in this factsheet. When it comes to

beverage habits, an updated reanalysis of the UK National Diet and Nutrition Survey in children aged 4-10 years found that the average daily fluid intake from water was 276 ml per day, with 620 ml per day coming from other beverages (milk supplied 216 ml per day).

In children aged 11-18 years, daily fluid intake from water was 453 ml per day, with an additional 680 ml per day coming from other beverages (of which milk supplied 150 ml). Another survey has raised concerns that children aren't drinking enough when compared with the European recommendations for adequate intake. Approximately a third of 4 – 8 year olds drank less than the recommended value and over 50 % of 9 – 13 year olds weren't drinking enough.

### **WATER AND CHILDREN'S COGNITION**

Research suggests that mild dehydration (1% body weight loss) can lead to reductions in concentration and mental performance in children. Studies suggest that children's mental performance can be improved when they are given access to water. In one study, 58 children aged 7 to 9 years were divided into two groups; one group followed their normal drinking habits, while the other was offered extra water (250ml). The results showed that children provided with extra water reported less thirst and performed better when visual attention tasks were carried out. Similarly, another study found that having access to a drink (a 250 ml bottle of water) significantly improved children's visual attention and fine motor skills in school such as their handwriting and ability to copy text.

A study in 2012 also found that children's auditory number span (the number of items that can be repeated in sequence) was significantly reduced if they became dehydrated. Authors also found that drinking extra water (1,000 ml over the course of the day) at school helped to improve their short-term memory. However, it should be considered that while these examples of studies in children suggest that drinking extra water helps to improve cognitive function, further controlled clinical studies are also needed.

### A NOTE ON BEDWETTING

Bedwetting (also known as nocturnal enuresis) can be common in children and it can have considerable effects on their confidence and self esteem. Although more research is needed, it is possible that bedwetting could be linked to children not drinking enough fluids during the school day, and then overloading in the evening. This drinking pattern has been identified in a UK school survey.

It has been suggested that there is no need to stop a child drinking before going to bed. Ideally, they should drink normally until an hour and a half before going to bed and then drink only mouthfuls instead of full glasses to relieve thirst. There is no evidence to suggest that avoiding drinking for a long time before bedtime reduces the risk of bedwetting. Children should always be reassured that bedwetting is a common problem and that they are not on their own.

## Hydration guidelines for children

In the UK the Children's Food Trust aims to encourage healthy hydration habits in children and recommends that schools should serve only plain, natural drinks such as water, milk and pure fruit/vegetable juices.

The Trust's voluntary code of practice for drinks aims to encourage the consumption of healthier drinks that are unsweetened and additive-free whenever possible. The Natural Hydration Council in collaboration with the British Nutrition Foundation has also developed a children's hydration glass as a clear guide for parents and teachers. The glass advises that drinking water is a good choice throughout the day, as it hydrates without providing calories and risking harm to teeth.

While the amount of water a child needs depends on many different factors including their age, gender, the weather and how much physical activity they do, it is advised that children aged 4-13 years, aim to drink 6-8 glasses of fluid a day (on top of the water provided by the food in their diet). Younger children need relatively smaller drinks (e.g. 150 ml serving) and older children need larger drinks (e.g. 250–300 ml serving). The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has also developed a set of fluid requirements for children of different ages.

## EFSA'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WATER INTAKE IN CHILDREN

Gender	Age group	Amount of fluid from drinks and food (litres/day) <sup>1</sup>	Amount of fluid from drinks only (litres/day) <sup>2</sup>
Boys and girls	4 to 8 years	1.6	1.1-1.3
Girls	9 to 13 years	1.9	1.3-1.5
Boys	9 to 13 years	2.1	1.5-1.7

**Key:**

1: It is estimated that 70-80% of the recommended fluid comes from drinks and 20-30% from food.

2: Estimated amounts of fluid from beverages only.

It should also be considered that children often copy their parents' behaviour, so showing your enjoyment of water will help encourage them to drink it. Studies also suggest that a dislike of a food or drink can be overcome by repeating tastings five to 10 times over a two-week period, but avoid using excessive coercion or pressure to get them to drink it.

Equally, giving children tangible rewards, such as stickers, may help to encourage them to drink water or eat foods that they dislike. It is best to reward them with something that is not food or drink otherwise this may devalue the food or drink you are trying to get them to accept. Furthermore, giving children water at mealtimes may help children to eat vegetables, as it can help to dilute their strong (and sometimes bitter) taste.

# HEALTHY HYDRATION

for children aged 4 - 13



This guide is intended to help parents, teachers and carers choose a balance of drinks for children aged 4-13.

The amount of fluid a child needs depends on many factors including their age, their gender, the weather and how much physical activity they do, but generally they should aim to drink about 6-8 glasses of fluid per day (on top of the water provided by food in their diet).

Younger children need relatively smaller servings (e.g. 150ml) and older children need larger servings (e.g. 250-300ml).

This illustration provides guidance on the variety of drinks that might be consumed by this age group.

The Natural Hydration Council is the owner of all intellectual property resting in this child's Hydration Glass™ © 2012

**DRINK PLENTY**  
**Water**  
 Drinking water is a good choice throughout the day because it hydrates without providing extra calories (kilojoules) or risking harm to teeth.

**HAVE REGULARLY**  
**Milk**  
 Provides water and is a useful source of nutrients, especially protein, B vitamins and calcium. It is best for most children to choose lower fat varieties. However, milky drinks containing added sugar such as milkshakes, hot chocolate and malted drinks should only be drunk occasionally.

**HAVE IN MODERATION**  
**Fruit juices**  
 provide water and some vitamins and minerals. One serving of 100% fruit juice counts towards a maximum of one portion of a child's 5 A DAY\*. They contain sugar and can be acidic, so having these too often may risk harm to teeth. It is better for teeth to dilute fruit juice with water and to drink fruit juice with a meal rather than between meals.

**CAN HAVE ONCE A DAY**  
**Smoothies**  
 provide water and some vitamins and minerals. One serving of smoothie can count as a maximum of 2 of a child's 5 A DAY\*. They contain sugar and can be acidic, so having these too often may risk harm to teeth. It is better for teeth to drink smoothies with a meal rather than between meals.

**JUST OCCASIONALLY**  
**Low calorie soft drinks**  
 provide water without extra calories (kilojoules), but can be acidic so having these too often may risk harm to teeth. Be aware some contain caffeine.

**JUST OCCASIONALLY**  
**Soft drinks containing sugar**  
 provide water, but also calories (kilojoules) without any extra nutrients. They can also be acidic, so having these too often may risk harm to teeth. Be aware that some contain caffeine.

**JUST OCCASIONALLY**  
**Tea and coffee**  
 Caffeine is a stimulant naturally present in coffee and in smaller amounts in tea. Small amounts of caffeine are harmless but high intakes should be avoided, especially for young children. However, decaffeinated versions can be drunk more often. It is best for children to drink tea and coffee with low fat milk and no added sugar.

Designed by the Natural Hydration Council and advised by the British Nutrition Foundation  
 \*smoothies count as two portions of 5 A DAY if they contain 150ml of fruit juice and 40g crushed or pulsed fruit.

# Conclusions

Water is one of the most natural, healthy beverages that children can drink. Encouraging children to quench their thirst with water will help children to develop a taste for it, which is an important first step towards developing lifelong healthy preferences. Parents and caregivers play an important role in helping children to develop healthy hydration habits and in making sure that children are offered sufficient amounts of water to maintain optimal hydration.

Finally, there is a need to highlight the importance of adequate hydration among schoolchildren themselves. In particular, children should be encouraged to make use of any water supplied at school, as this could potentially have an effect on their mental performance throughout the day.

## TOP TIPS

1. Children should aim to hydrate healthily with plain, natural drinks that are unsweetened and free from additives.
2. Children should be encouraged to drink fluids in the morning with breakfast, and at regular intervals during the day.
3. Research suggests that adequately hydrated children may perform better in school.
4. Children should aim to have 6-8 drinks per day which should ideally be water, milk or fruit/vegetable juices.
5. Repeated tastings of water may help children to develop a taste for water.
6. Giving children water at mealtimes may help children to eat vegetables, as it can help to dilute their strong (and sometimes bitter) taste.
7. Children taking part in sports or exposed to warm weather need to replenish the lost fluids by drinking more water.
8. Parents and other care givers can play a key role in helping to ensure that children are provided with drinks on a regular basis and by actively encouraging their consumption.

### PLEASE NOTE:

*This information sheet has been based on scientific evidence available. The information contained in this fact sheet is not a substitute for medical advice or treatment, and we recommend consultation with your doctor or health care professional if you have any concerns your child's health.*

# Source material

Content in this section derived from:

- “The essential guide to hydration”, Natural Hydration Council, October 2015
- “Hydration for recreational and physical activities”, Natural Hydration Council, July 2014
- “Hydration and exercise”, Natural Hydration Council, February 2013
- “Hydration for children”, Natural Hydration Council, September 2013

# FITNESS



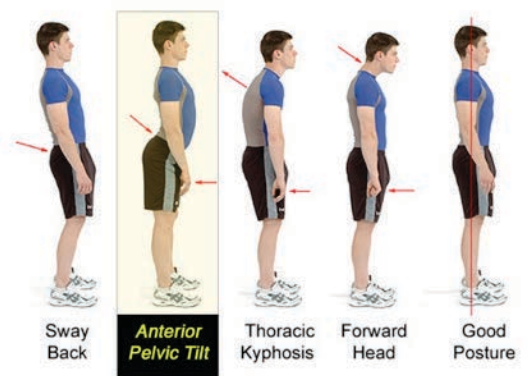
Special Olympics  
Healthy Athletes®



# Educational information, workouts, and stretching

## Basic workout technique

- Make sure to breathe out on exertion and breathe in when coming back to starting position
- For example, during a pushup, breathe out when you push yourself off the ground, and then breathe in as you lower yourself back to the ground
- During static exercises or cardio, try to keep a steady breathing and use your diaphragm for breathing
- Make sure to always keep proper form when working out, keep your core engaged, and ensure that you are working the correct muscle group
- Proper form means proper posture in most cases
- Make sure to fix imbalances that move your body away from proper posture before starting a workout program
- When working out, you want to push yourself to do as much as you can, but you want to do this within the exercise
- What this means is do not push yourself or lift so much weight that you have to use other muscles to help out the exercise. This will cause imbalances and lead to injury.
- A common example you see in the gym is lifting too much with the bicep curl. Instead of controlling the weight through the whole movement, people will swing the weight to get it up, use their shoulder muscles, or arch their back to complete the exercise
- Always check with a fitness professional before attempting a new exercise



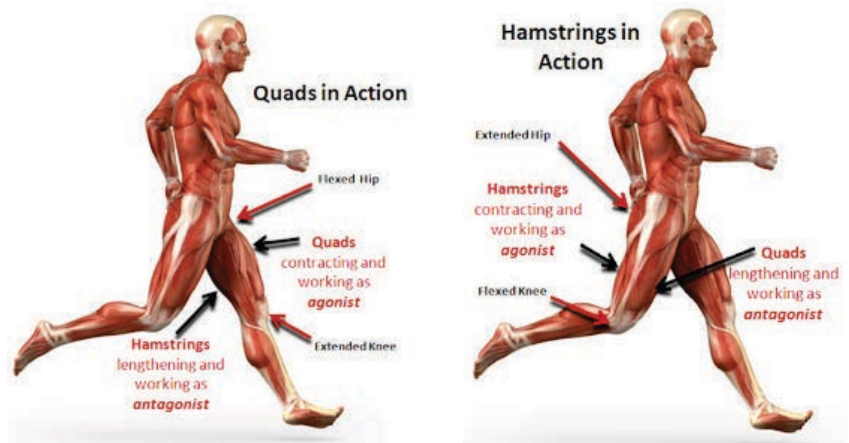
# Exercises

## What is muscular imbalance?

- Muscles can either be agonists or antagonists for the movement of a joint
- Agonists assist movement while antagonists resist movement
- If a workout or sports routine is not balanced, imbalances in the strength of agonists and antagonists can occur
- When muscles that perform work on the same joint are out of balance, injury can occur over time

## Why is muscular balance important?

- Optimal sport performance
- Injury prevention
- Important before starting a training program

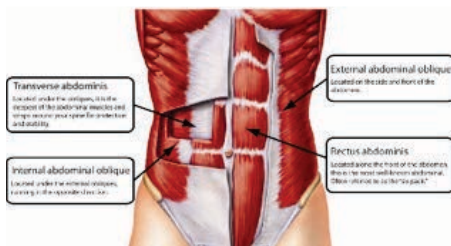
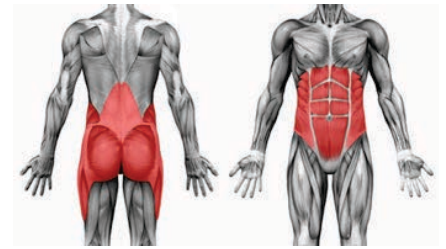


## Workout Tips

- Always keep your core strong and engaged
- Execute the exercises with controlled movements
- Once proper form is lost, that is your max and you don't need to do any more repetitions
- If you ever feel back or joint pain, stop the exercise immediately and do not do the exercise again until a fitness professional looks at your form
- Always push yourself to work as hard as you can!

## Why Is core strength important?

- Made up of muscles that act as isometric or dynamic stabilizers for activities
- Weak or imbalanced core can lead to back, hip, shoulder, or other joint pains
- A strong core is the foundation of a proper training program as dynamic movements, like the one used in sports, cannot be performed without a strong core



## What is the core?

- Group of muscles in the body that helps protect the spine, keep the hips aligned, and protect internal organs
- Most important muscle group for sport as all sports base movement off of core strength

## Activation: the transverse abdominis

- To activate this muscle go onto your hands and knees, and then try to round your back by using your stomach muscles to pull your hips up



## The plank

- The plank is the best exercise to start with when strengthening your core
- Make sure to keep the muscles in your lower stomach tight and prevent your lower back from arching

## Dead bug

- Keep your back flat on the ground
- Start by bringing your arms and legs up into the air into position 1 shown
- You will then lower your left leg and right arm to just above the ground, as shown in position 2, and then return to position 1
- Alternate sides for as many reps as possible



## Bird dog

- Start on your hands and knees and activate your core
- Slowly raise your left arm and right leg out, keeping your hips and shoulders level to the ground and hold as long as you can
- Take a break, and then alternate arm/leg and perform on the opposite side as well for the same amount of time



## How to advance core exercises

Once you have mastered the basic core exercises, it is time to make them tougher. There are many ways to make an exercise tougher including:

- Increasing balance - one leg or one arm, adding in a bosu or stability ball, using a trx
- Adding more weight to an exercise
- Performing more reps/sets of an exercise
- Remember: Always keep proper form and keep your core strong, if your back ever hurts then stop the exercise immediately and consult a professional

## How to advance the plank

Once you can hold the plank on your toes for 3 sets of 2 minutes, you are ready to make it tougher. You can do this by:

- Lifting one leg or arm off of the ground, or alternate arms/legs being lifted, performing a plank to side plank combination, using a stability ball



## How to advance dead bug

Once you are able to perform 20/side of the dead bug, you are ready to advance the dead bug exercise. You can do this by:

- Switching to both legs and arms instead of one at a time, passing a ball from your feet to your hands, hang from a bar and raise your knees or legs up



Once you can perform a plank on two toes for 2 mins and you can do 10 leg raises, you may be ready to try some of these exercises:

- Knees to elbows
- V ups
- Ball rollouts (knees or toes)
- Russian twist



### Cardio exercise: Jogging on the spot

- Lift one leg and the opposite arm at a time
- Do this for the required time
- This exercise works the aerobic system as well as many muscles in your body



### Cardio exercise: Jumping jacks

- Jump in the air and as you jump, raise your hands above your head and spread your feet out
- Jump again back to the starting point
- This exercise works the aerobic system, as well as many muscles in your body



### Cardio exercise: Skipping

- As you jump in the air, swing the skipping rope under your feet and around your body
- This exercise requires a lot of practice and coordination so don't be discouraged if you can't do it at first



## Cardio exercise: Burpees

- 1-5 Put your hands down to the ground, jump your feet out and back
- 5-7 Stand back up and jump into the air
- Repeat multiple times until time limit is up
- This is a great full body exercise that works the aerobic system



## Cardio exercise: Mountain climbers

- Start in a pushup position
- Bring one knee in at a time and contract your core
- As you get better at this exercise you can speed it up
- Make sure not to hurt your wrists
- This exercise is great for your aerobic system, as well as your core muscles

## Leg function: Balance is key

- As discussed previously, balance is very important to prevent injuries
- Many athletes experience knee, ankle, hip injuries that could have been prevented by making sure their lower body is balanced

## Functional lower body training

- We want to make sure we work all of the leg muscles together in functional movements and not isolate muscles
- Isolating muscles during training can cause imbalances, which can lead to injury
- You would never do a seated leg extension or flexion in a sport



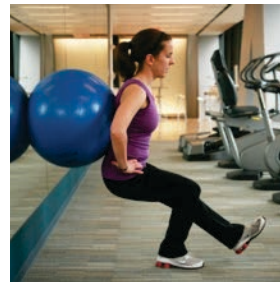
## Body weight squats

- Start with feet shoulder width apart
- Squat down to create a 90° angle between your lower and upper leg
- Stand back up and repeat for required repetitions
- Make sure to keep your core strong and your knees behind your toes
- This is a great exercise for your leg muscles



## One-leg squats

- Same technique as a regular squat, but one leg at a time
- Make sure to keep your knee and hip aligned and keep your knee over your ankle and behind your toes
- You can start with a ball or trx and work up to no support



## Inchworms

- Start with your feet and hands on the ground
- Crawl your hands out until you are in pushup position and then crawl back to the starting position
- This is a great exercise for your upper body and core muscles



## Body weight lunges

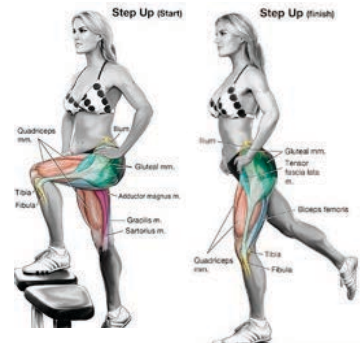
- Start standing with feet shoulder width apart
- Step out one leg and come down into a lunge, creating a 90° angle between your upper and lower leg
- Step back to standing and repeat on the other leg
- The required repetitions are for each leg
- This is a great exercise for your core muscles and your leg muscles
- Make sure to keep your knee behind your toe





## One-leg step up

- Start with your left leg up on a bench or chair and your right leg on the ground
- Keep your core strong and push through your left foot that is on the bench to bring yourself up onto the bench
- Lower your right foot back to the ground slowly, and controlled, using your left glute and hamstring muscles
- Repeat on both sides



## Glute bridges

- Start on your back with your heels shoulder width apart and close to your body
- Push through your leg and glute muscles to extend your hips into the air
- To make this exercise tougher you can perform it one leg at a time as is shown in the picture
- This is a great exercise for the muscles of the back of your leg



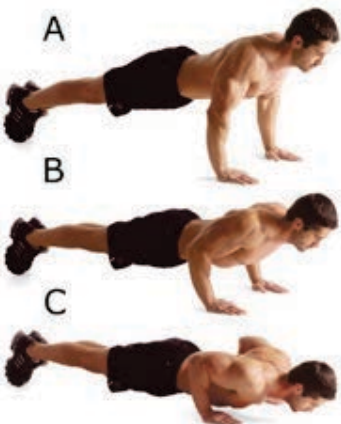
## One-leg deadlift

- Stand on one leg, hinge forward just like a deadlift using the glute and hamstring muscle of the leg that is standing to control your movement and pull your body back to standing
- Keep your core engaged, and your hips square as you hinge, do not tilt your hips open



## Pushups

- Start in a pushup position with your hands shoulder width apart
- Keep your back and core stable as you lower yourself almost to the ground
- Push through your chest muscles to bring yourself back to starting position
- This is a great exercise for your upper body muscles and core



## Pullups

- Hang from a bar at a playground or gym with hands just wider than shoulder width and palms facing away from you
- Use your back muscles to pull your chin up above the bar
- Keep your core strong so you don't swing
- Lower yourself slowly and repeat
- This is a great exercise for your back muscles and core



## T-Plank

- Start in a plank position with hands shoulder width apart
- Keep your core strong as you lift one hand off the ground and rotate your body into the shape of a T
- Come back to starting position and repeat on the other side
- This is a great exercise for your upper body and core

## Bent over reverse fly

- Keep your legs shoulder width apart and your core strong as you use the back of your legs to lower yourself to the starting position
- Keep these muscles strong as you extend your arms up until they are parallel with your body, squeezing your shoulder blades together
- Slowly lower your arms and repeat
- This is a great full body exercise



# Flexibility

## What is flexibility?

- The ability for a muscle to lengthen through a full range of motion unimpeded

## Why Is flexibility important?

- Decrease risk of injury
- Increase performance in sports i.e. better arm and shoulder extension and rotation for swimmers, longer strides for runners, deeper knee bends and hip flexion for skiers
- Helps athletes achieve a larger range of motion
- Improves posture

## Flexibility training

- Should be included after every workout at least 4-7 times a week
- Should last at least 5-10 minutes per training session
- Each stretch should be held for 30-60 seconds
- Stretch routine should include all muscles, with focus on muscles used during workout/activity

Stretching is a very important, and often neglected, part of your fitness program. You should stretch 5-6 times a week for the rest of your life. If you don't stretch properly, it can cause your muscles to get tight and can cause joint injuries. Luckily, stretching can take as little as 10 minutes and is easy to add to your everyday routine. Follow this stretching guide below to prevent yourself from getting tight!

# Lower body flexibility

## Hip flexor stretch

Make sure to keep your core engaged and feel the stretch in your hip flexor muscles, which run from the top of your quad to your stomach. Hold this stretch for 30-60 seconds on both legs.



## Quad stretch

Keep your core engaged and do not let your pelvis tilt forwards. You should feel the stretch in the quad muscle, which runs from your knee to your hip. Hold stretch for 30-60 seconds on each leg.

## Hamstring stretch

Keep your leg that is on the chair straight but do not lock the joint. Make sure to keep your back straight and do not round your back forward. You should feel the stretch down the back of the leg that is on the chair. You should feel the stretch in your hamstring, which runs from your knee to your hip. Hold stretch for 30-60 seconds on each leg.



## Hamstring stretch

Keep your legs straight but do not lock the knee joints. Put a towel around your feet and pull your body down to your legs. Make sure to keep your back straight while you do this. You should feel a stretch in the back of your legs from your hips to the back of your knees.



## Groin and hamstring stretch

Spread your feet out as wide as you can, keeping your toes pointing forwards. Lean forward and put your hands against a wall, keeping your core strong and your back straight. Slowly work your way down the wall until you feel a gentle stretch in your hamstring and groin. Hold this stretch for 30-60 seconds.



## Glute stretch

Keep your back flat against the ground and slowly push your left knee away from you until you feel a stretch. To feel a deeper stretch you can move closer to the wall. Hold stretch for 30-60 seconds on each leg.



## Crossover hip stretch

Start laying flat on the ground. Raise your right leg up off the ground towards you, bending it in a 90 degree angle. Use your left hand to gently pull your right leg over to the left of your body, feeling the stretch through your right hip and glute muscle. Keep your right shoulder on the ground and only go through a range of motion that is comfortable, you do not need to bring your right knee to the ground. Hold this stretch for 30-60 seconds and then repeat with the left leg.



## Calf stretch

Keep your toe against the wall with your foot in dorsiflexion. Lean forward and put pressure into your toe against the wall, keeping your back straight. Hold stretch for 30-60 seconds.



# Upper body flexibility

## Back stretch

Keep your core engaged and relax back onto your legs. Try to let your hips sink towards the ground and lengthen your spine. Feel the stretch in your upper back and shoulders. Hold stretch for 30-60 seconds.



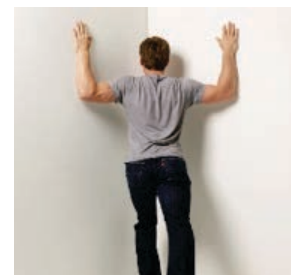
## Wrap-around back stretch

Sit in a chair, on the ground, or stand and cross your arms in front of your body, grabbing your opposite shoulders. Pull your arms apart without letting go of your shoulders to feel a stretch in your upper back. To get a deeper stretch you can lower your chin. Hold this stretch for 30-60 seconds, breathing deeply.



## Chest stretch

Keep your arms at 90 degrees, one foot in front of the other and slowly lean into a corner. You want to feel this stretch through your chest and front of your shoulders. Hold for 30-60 seconds.



## Lying chest stretch

This can be an advanced stretch, so do not do if it causes pain in your back or shoulders. Lay over top of a bosu or foam roller, keeping your core engaged and feet planted firmly on the ground. Raise your hands over head and then back behind you, trying to touch the ground. Hold for 30-60 seconds, breathing deeply. You can change the position of your arms to feel a better stretch.



## Seated twist

Begin by sitting tall, extending both of your legs in front of you. Bend your right knee and cross it over the left thigh. Take your left elbow and place it on the outside of the right knee, then place right hand on the floor behind you, looking over your right shoulder. Make sure to keep your spine tall and your core strong. You want to feel a gentle stretch. Hold stretch for 30-60 second on each side.



## Shoulder/chest stretch

Clasp your hands behind you and slowly raise your hands up until you feel a stretch in your chest and shoulders. Make sure to keep your shoulders back and prevent them from rounding forwards to get a proper stretch. Hold this stretch for 30-60 seconds.

## Wrist stretch

Put your hands together as if you were praying. Slowly move your hands down towards your belly button until you feel a stretch in your wrists. Hold this stretch for 30-60 seconds.



## Neck stretch

Hold onto a chair with both hands and slowly tilt your head to one side until you feel a stretch through your neck and shoulder. Make sure not to let your shoulders round forward to get the best stretch. Hold for 30-60 seconds on both sides.



# More resources

## Basic workout plan

<b>Monday 3-5 Sets</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday 3-5 Sets</b>
Cardio Exercise- 30-60 sec BW Squats- 5-20 Inchworms- 5-20 BW Lunges- 5-20 Glute Bridges- 5-20 1 min rest, repeat	Cardio- 10-30mins Stretch 10-30mins	Burpees- 30-60 sec Push-ups- 5-20 Pullups- Max T Plank- 5-20 Bent R. Flies- 5-20 1 min rest, repeat
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday 3-5 Sets</b>	<b>Saturday/Sunday</b>
Rest Day or Cardio- 10-30mins Stretch- 10-30mins	Mountain Climbers 10-60 sec Dead Bug- 5-20 Bird Dog- 10-60 sec Plank- Max 2 min rest, repeat	Light Yoga or Rest



# More resources

## General fitness resources

<http://www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/guide/health-and-fitness-resources>

## Hiking

<http://www.hellobc.com/british-columbia/things-to-do/outdoor-activities/hiking.aspx>

<https://www.vancouvertrails.com/>

<http://www.trailsbc.ca/>

# Source material

Content in this section derived from:

- Special Olympics BC staff

**ATHLETES OF THE YEAR 2010-PRESENT**

YEAR	FEMALE	MALE
2010-2011	Jennifer Patis	Sébastien Cordeau
2011-2012	Kathleen Sayers	Jonathan Bell
2012-2013	Samantha Brassington	Gregory Larson & Michael
2013-2014	Vanessa Pizzolon	Michael Jones
2014-2015	Wolding	Alicia Blake Patis



*Special Olympics*  
British Columbia

**MENTAL WELLNESS & RELAXATION**

Special Olympics  
Healthy Athletes



# Strategies for mental health wellness

According to Sydney Youngerman-Cole, RN, BSN, RNC and Katy E. Magee, MA, “many mental health problems begin when physical stress or emotional stress triggers chemical changes in your brain. The goal of treatment and prevention is to reduce stress and restore normal chemical processes in your brain.”

Coping skills are methods a person uses to deal with stressful situations. Obtaining and maintaining good coping skills does take practice. However utilizing these skills becomes easier over time. Most importantly, good coping skills make for good mental health wellness.

# Good coping skills

Good coping skills are crucial to managing the variety of stresses in life. How many good coping skills from the list below do you already use? Which ones could you improve upon?

Some good coping skills include:

- **Meditation and Relaxation Techniques:** Practicing deep breathing techniques, the relaxation response, or progressive muscle relaxation are ways to help reduce stress and induce relaxation.
- **Time to Yourself:** It is important to set aside time everyday to allow yourself to relax and escape the stress of life. Give yourself a private, mini vacation from everything going on around you.
- **Physical Activity:** Moving around and getting the heart rate up causes the body to release endorphins (the body's feel good hormones). Exercising provides some stress relief.
- **Reading:** Escape from reality completely by reading. Reading can help you to de-stress by taking your mind off everyday life.
- **Friendship:** Having friends who are willing to listen and support one through good and bad times is essential.
- **Humor:** Adding humor to a stressful situation can help to lighten the mood.
- **Hobbies:** Having creative outlets such as listening to music, drawing or gardening are great ways to relax and relieve everyday stress.

- Spirituality: Actively believing in a higher power or divine being can have many health benefits. In recent studies, it has been found that people who pray have better mental health than those who do not.
- Pets: Taking care of a pet helps distract the mind from stressful thoughts. Studies Show that pets are a calming influence in people's lives.
- Sleeping: The human body needs a chance to rest and repair itself after a long and stressful day. Sleeping gives the body this chance so that it is ready to perform another day.
- Nutrition: Eating foods that are good for you not only improve your physical health, but they play a major role in your mental health. When your body gets the proper nutrients, it is better able to function in every capacity.

# Negative coping skills

There are also negative coping skills which can hinder progress in dealing more positively with stress.

Actions that are harmful to both mental and physical health include:

- Drugs
- Excessive alcohol use
- Self-mutilation
- Ignoring or storing hurt feelings
- Sedatives
- Stimulants
- Excessive working
- Avoiding problems
- Denial

These actions offer only temporary relief, if any, from stress. Ignoring or covering up how you feel does not solve the problem and the next time the situation arises, you will still have no way of dealing with it.

The next time you find yourself faced with a difficult or stressful circumstance, remember to practice your new coping skills. These skills lead to good mental health and happier you.

# 10 tips for better mental health

Below are some great tips from Mental Health and Wellness Week.

## 1. Build Confidence

Identify your abilities and weaknesses together, accept them, build on them and do the best you can with what you have.

## 2. Accept Compliments

Many of us have difficulty accepting kindness from others but we all need to remember the positive in our lives when times get tough.

## 3. Make Time for Family and Friends

These relationships need to be nurtured; if taken for granted they will dwindle and not be there to share life's joys and sorrows.

## 4. Give and Accept Support

Friends and family relationships thrive when they are "put to the test." Just as you seek help when you are having a tough time, a friend or family member might come to you in their time of need.

## 5. Create a Meaningful Budget

Financial problems are big causes of stress, especially in today's economy. Over-spending on our "wants" instead of our "needs" can compound money worries. Writing down where you

money is going helps you keep a closer eye on your finances.

#### 6. Volunteer

Being involved in community gives a sense of purpose and satisfaction that paid work cannot. Find a local organization where your life skills can be put to good use.

#### 7. Manage Stress

We all have stressors in our lives but learning how to deal with them when they threaten to overwhelm us will help to maintain our mental health.

#### 8. Find Strength in Numbers

Sharing a problem with others who have had similar experiences may help you find a solution and will make you feel less isolated. Even talking about a situation with people who have not experienced what you are going through is a good way to gain outside perspective.

#### 9. Identify and Deal with Moods

We all need to find safe and constructive ways to express our feelings of anger, sadness, joy and fear. Channeling your emotions creatively is a wonderful way to work off excess feelings. Writing (keeping a journal), painting, dancing, making crafts, etc. are all good ways to help deal with emotions.

#### 10. Learn to Be at Peace with Yourself

Get to know who you are, what makes you really happy and learn to balance what you can and cannot change about yourself.

For more resources, visit <http://www.mhww.org/strategies>



# Four basic dimensions of mental health and wellbeing

## Thoughts

The way you think about something has a big impact on your mental health. Changes in your thoughts often go along with changes in your mental health. When you feel well, it's easier to see positive aspects. When you aren't well, it's easy to get stuck on negative things and ignore positive things.

## Body reactions

Body reactions are changes in your body functions such as heart rate, breathing, digestion, brain chemicals, hormones and more. Changes in your body reactions often go along with changes in your mental health.

## Behaviours

Behaviours are the helpful or harmful things you do. Other people can usually see your behaviours. Changes in behaviour often go along with changes in mental health.

## Emotions

Emotions are the way you feel. They can be pleasant or unpleasant. Changes in emotions often go along with changes in mental health.

## Thoughts

Examples of positive thoughts:

- I know I can get through these rough times
- I feel excited about life!
- I know my friends really care about me
- I feel good about the way my life is going these days
- I have some really cool talents and interests
- I want to do something that makes a positive difference
- I'm a good person even though I have some flaws
- Good things are going to happen to me

Examples of negative thoughts:

- It feels like something really bad is going to happen
- Nothing good ever seems to happen to me
- I'm never going to get through this
- My flaws are too big to overcome
- I feel like I'm losing my mind
- I'm ugly and stupid
- They think I'm a loser
- Life sucks!

## Body reactions

Examples of body reactions to stress:

- Chest pain, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle tension, muscle aches or headaches
- Sexual problems, such as low sex drive
- Aggravation of an existing health problem (e.g., acne, digestive disorders, migraines, chronic pain)
- Upset stomach or nausea
- Lack of appetite or increased appetite
- Pounding, racing or abnormal heartbeat
- Feeling that you're separated from things around you
- Urge to urinate or frequent urination
- Sweating, hot flushes or cold chills
- Feeling dizzy or light-headed
- Upset bowel or diarrhea

## Behaviours

Examples of behaviours:

- Exercise
- Avoiding the things that upset you
- Engaging in hobbies or leisure activities
- Isolating yourself and pulling away from friends and family
- Doing things that distract you from your problems, like watching TV or working late
- Working on a solution to a problem one step at a time
- Crying often
- Overeating, not eating enough or purging food (such as vomiting, over-exercising)
- Lashing out at other people (verbally or physically)
- Excessive dependency or clinging to loved ones
- Reaching out to a friend or family member for support and understanding
- Practicing your spiritual activities
- Using alcohol or drugs to make the bad feelings go away
- Doing something relaxing, like taking a bath or practicing yoga

## Emotions

Examples of pleasant emotions:

- Happiness or joy
- Contentment
- Sense of calm
- Excitement
- Feeling love or affection
- Feeling cheerful

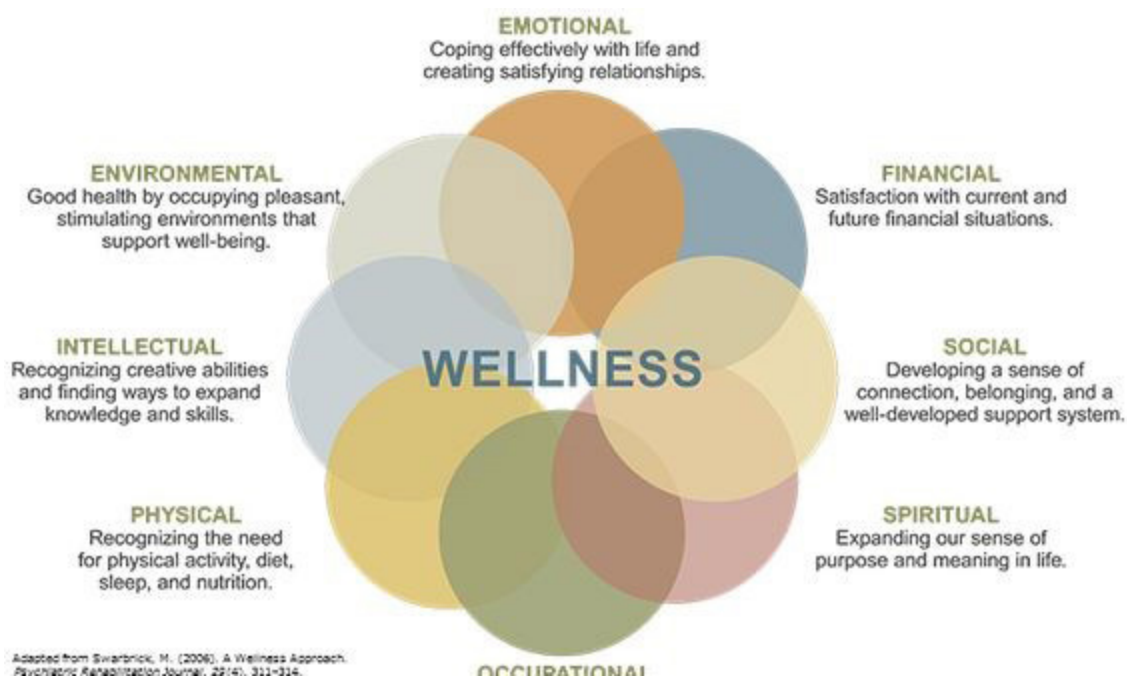
Examples of unpleasant emotions:

- Irritability or anger
- Frustration
- Anxiety or fear
- Sadness or feeling down
- Feeling empty or numb
- Hopelessness

Mental health is determined by our overall patterns of thoughts, emotions, behaviours and body reactions.

Each of the four mental health dimensions can influence all of the others. Here's an example:





# Shower meditation

Every time you take a shower, visualize washing away your stress and anxiety.

Concentrate on the feeling of the water upon your skin.

Envision the power of the water washing away your negative thoughts.

Feel sadness, regret, anger, and depression washing right off of you.

Let it all go down the drain.

You will start to feel lighter and much more clear.

# Unhealthy Thinking Styles

There are common “unhealthy thinking styles” that can negatively contribute to our mental wellness. Do you recognize any of the following statements?

## All or Nothing

Categorizing people or situations as either/or; there is no middle ground.

*“If I don’t do this project perfectly, then I have failed.”*

## Mental Filter

Focusing solely on negative evidence while excluding the positive.

*“I got those three questions wrong on the test. I did terribly.”*

## Jumping to Conclusions

Imagining that you know what others are thinking. Also, predicting the future.

*“I don’t want to go to the party because no one is going to talk to me.”*

## Emotional Reasoning

Assuming that your thoughts and feelings are facts.

*“I feel overweight, therefore I must be overweight.”*

## Labeling

Assigning judgments to ourselves or others based on a small number of qualities or events.

*“I forgot to respond to that message. Am such a bad friend.”*

## Overgeneralization

Perceiving a pattern of coming to a broad conclusion from a small number of experiences.

*“Nothing good ever happens to me.”*

## **Disqualifying the Positive**

Discounting the good things that have happened.

*"She only complimented me to be polite. She didn't really mean it."*

## **Catastrophizing**

Blowing a negative experience out of proportion or minimizing a positive one.

*"I missed a bill payment. Now my credit will be ruined, and I'll never get a mortgage."*

## **Should Statements**

Using words like "should" with ourselves or others to enforce ideas of rules.

*"I should be doing the laundry right now."*

## **Personalization**

Blaming yourself for something out of your control. Also blaming others for something that was in your control.

*"Traffic is bad, and I'm going to be late. Why didn't I take the other route?"*

Remember, you would never speak like this to a friend or family member - do not talk to yourself negatively either! Show yourself kindness by developing positive thinking styles instead.

# Wellness journal

DATE:

## Affirmations

Tell yourself something kind and encouraging. Make it specific and in the present tense.

## Did you experience any unhealthy thinking styles?

- All or nothing
- Mental filter
- Jumping to conclusions
- Emotional reasoning
- Labelling
- Overgeneralization
- Disqualifying the positive
- Catastrophizing
- Should statements
- Personalization

**Challenge the unhealthy thoughts by assuming the best in yourself (and others). Write an alternative interpretation.**

## Gratitude

List a few things you are grateful for today and why each of these events occurred.



# More resources

- Visit [www.cmha.bc.ca](http://www.cmha.bc.ca) for the Canadian Mental Health Association's B.C. Division
- Visit [www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca) or call 8-1-1 for HealthLinkBC
- Visit [www.keltymentalhealth.ca](http://www.keltymentalhealth.ca) for Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre: B.C.'s information source for children, youth, and families
- [www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-module/wellness-module-1-mental-health-matters](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/wellness-module/wellness-module-1-mental-health-matters)

# Source material

Content in this section derived from:

- Canadian Mental Health Association of Richmond, BC
- Mental Health Wellness Week <http://www.mhww.org/strategies.html>
- Special Olympics BC staff

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