
Developing Healthy Attitudes and Habits

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Did you know how you think about food can affect your workouts and performances? Did you know nutrition and food are really another gymnastics event you should train? Did you know YOUR body is uniquely made and has a built-in system to let you know 30 minutes before your energy level is going to drop?

Read ahead if any of these questions peaked your interest!

As we all know, food is really the fuel to feed our muscles and brain. That is why as a training athlete, you want to feed your body the fuel that will maximize your workouts, help repair your injuries and allow you to perform your best. However, this is not as simple as it sounds because how we view food and our bodies can get in the way of choosing the best food. We are talking about eating attitudes-the relationship we have with food and our bodies.

What is Healthy Eating?

Healthy eating is trusting your body to eat when you are hungry and stopping when you are full. It is viewing food as fuel and not as something to fear and resist.

Healthy eating is flexible and may vary with your schedule, emotions and your hunger level.

Healthy eating takes up some of your daily schedule to plan and eat, but should not take central focus over all of your thoughts and feelings.

Healthy eating involves enjoying food. It does not involve judging yourself just by the food choices you make one day.

There are several fun activities that you can do in the gym to promote healthy eating attitudes and encourage experimenting with food! Look below and try one of these activities:

1. Try different recipes and share with your fellow teammates.
2. Another activity is to clip pictures of foods that are healthy for a gymnast's diet and paste them with a gluestick on a poster board for your room or the gym. High carbohydrate and lean protein foods are good choices. I bet you can name many foods but here's a start: banana, oatmeal, fig bar, black beans, whole wheat tortilla, baked potato, corn, and turkey breast.
3. Save different nutrition articles and share them with the coach and fellow gymnasts. Discuss the article to check proper information and helpful hints.



unhealthy eating attitudes. You may need a little help getting your eating attitudes back in the healthy range.

*If you suspect that you may be struggling with your eating attitudes or know someone who might be, remember admitting this does not mean you are a bad person. It is important you bring your concern to an adult or coach you feel comfortable discussing this with. There are great resources to help you. Just like needing extra help with strength or conditioning, nutrition and healthy eating attitudes is another gymnastics event, so getting a little help with it makes good gymnastics sense!!

RECIPES

Fresh Fruit Pizza

(serves 4)

1 package pizza dough mix for 10-12" pizza, sweeten with 2 tsp. sugar or honey
 2 (6 ounce) containers of lemon flavored nonfat yogurt
 3 cups sliced fresh fruit (go for variety in color such as: kiwi, strawberries, grapes, cantaloupe, mandarin oranges, etc...
 3 tbsp. orange juice frozen concentrate
 1 tsp. powdered sugar
 1 sprig of mint

1. Prepare pizza dough mix according to the package directions and add in the sugar or honey. Shape dough into a large circle on round pizza pan. Bake according to the package directions. Cool the finished crust.
2. Spread evenly the lemon yogurt over the crust. Begin with the kiwi and arrange each group of fresh fruit in a circle around the crust.
3. Mix orange juice concentrate with powdered sugar until smooth, then drizzle over the top of the fruited pizza. Add the garnish of mint for color. Chill for at least 1 hour.
4. Enjoy.
5. This pizza travels very well to school or gym for a snack.

Nutrition content per serving: 309 calories (only 3 grams of fat-(9% fat calories) 77% carbohydrate calories and 14% protein calories and 247 mg of calcium.

Black Bean and Veggie Quesadilla

This is so easy and Mexican food is the fastest growing food in the U.S., right behind pizza. Serves 1-2, depending how hungry you are.

2 Whole Wheat Tortillas (or try the new different colored tortillas-most are from veggie sources)

1 1/2 tbsp. black beans (you can use canned, just rinse them to reduce the sodium content or buy reduced sodium)

2 tbsp. of your favorite veggies (try to include at least 2 different kinds) Examples: chopped tomatoes, chopped green or red peppers, corn, broccoli, even peas or chopped string beans-go for the color!)

2 tbsp. shredded lowfat cheese (try to find cheddar and mozzarella mix-makes for nice flavor)

1 tbsp. salsa

2 tsp. nonfat yogurt or nonfat sour cream

1. On a plate, lay out one tortilla, spread the beans and veggies on top of it. Sprinkle the cheese all around. Lay the other tortilla on top.
2. Heat in the microwave until the cheese is melted
3. Top with the salsa and nonfat yogurt
4. Enjoy.

Nutrition content per serving (estimating above serves 2): Calories: 223 (3 grams of fat) only 12% fat calories, carbohydrate is 66% of calories and protein is 22% of calories.

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