



# Pre/Post Match Nutrition Guide

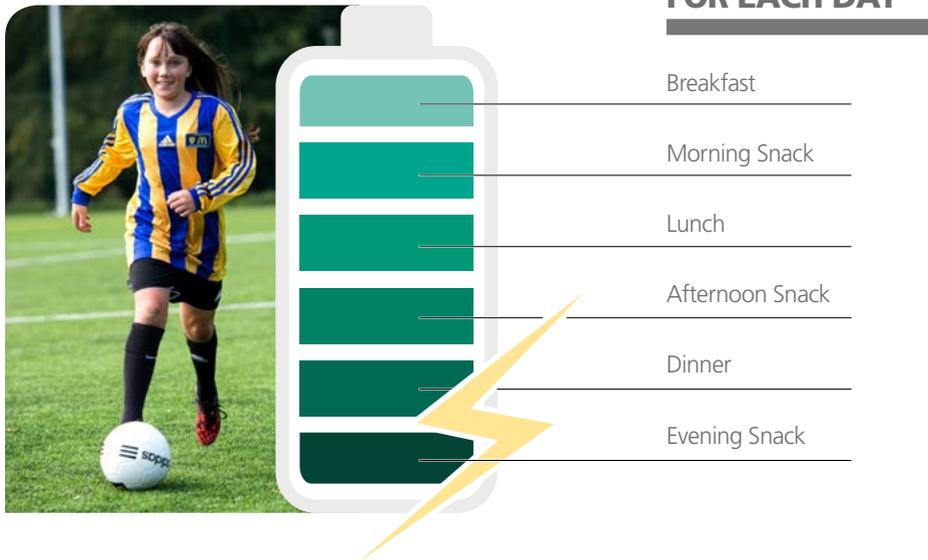
# EATING AND DRINKING FOR YOUR BEST PERFORMANCE

Eating correctly does wonders for your body both physically and mentally. As well as keeping you fit and healthy, it increases your energy levels and is the foundation for a positive mindset! These are all vital components affecting your level of performance in football and go a long way in helping you to pass with precision, shoot with accuracy and sustain your levels of endurance throughout the game.

Fuelling your body with the right amount of fluid and nutrients such as carbohydrates, proteins and fats will play a massive part in allowing you to reach your full potential in football. A nutritious diet is also vital in helping protect you from injuries and ensuring optimum recovery after training and matches.

As your levels of physical activity increase so does the demand for food and fluid. In the same way a plane needs fuel for take off our body needs fuel to perform. Therefore, it is extremely important that you eat and drink regularly throughout the day to make sure that your muscles are fully charged and ready for action.

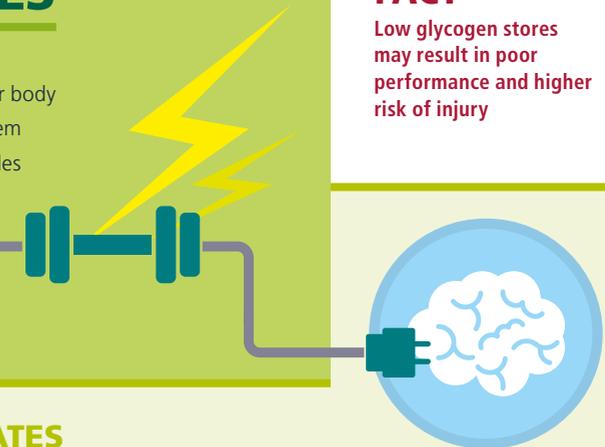
## YOUR AIM FOR EACH DAY



## CARBOHYDRATES

### HOW THEY ARE USED...

- Carbohydrate is the fuel that powers your body
- Energy source for brain and nervous system
- Stored as glycogen (energy) in your muscles
- If carbohydrate is not used it stores as fat



**FACT**  
Low glycogen stores may result in poor performance and higher risk of injury

## TYPES OF CARBOHYDRATES

### Slow-Releasing Carbohydrates

- Found in unprocessed whole foods
- Energy is released slowly in your body
- Keep you feeling fuller for longer
- Full of nutrients, vitamins and minerals and fibre



Wholegrain bread & pasta  
Brown Rice  
Sweet Potatoes

Whole Oats  
Grains  
Beans

### Fast-Releasing Carbohydrates

- Absorbed quickly in your body
- Provides immediate source of energy that lasts a short period of time
- Elevates your blood sugar which can cause weight gain and a higher risk of type 2 diabetes if you are inactive
- Removed nutrients



White Bread  
Pasta & Rice  
Bagels  
Breakfast Cereals with high sugar content



Mashed Potatoes  
Sweets  
Packaged Food & Snacks

## SLOW-RELEASING CARBOHYDRATES

Get your Carbohydrates from whole grains, sweet potatoes, quinoa, beans, porridge etc. Avoid processed food, white bread, white pasta, white rice, mashed potato, sweets, packaged snacks and fizzy juice. Therefore plenty of energy for football!



# FAT

## HOW THEY ARE USED...

- Necessary component for our body in limited amounts
- Protects our vital organs by providing insulation
- Fats keep the body warm
- Transports vitamin's in our bodies
- Consuming good fats in moderation will have longterm health benefits



## FACT

Good fats help to develop strength, power and speed

Vitamin K

Vitamin D

Vitamin E

Vitamin A

## TYPES OF FAT

### Bad Fats

- Raises bad (LDL) cholesterol and lowers good (HDL) cholesterol
- Clogs arteries that block the flow of oxygen-rich blood to the heart and brain.

Meat Fats  
Butter  
Cheese  
Mayonnaise  
Ready Meals  
Cookies



Doughnuts  
Chocolate  
Pies  
Cakes  
Crisps

### Good Fats

- Beneficial to the heart health and improves our cholesterol
- Provides the essential fatty acids that your body needs, but cannot make

Nuts  
Avocados  
Eggs  
Oily Fish (mackerel, salmon, tuna)



Virgin Olive Oil  
Olives  
Soya

## HOW TO REPLACE BAD FATS WITH GOOD FATS!

- Instead of margarines try spreading avocado or organic peanut butter on bread
- Avoid packaged foods when possible. Instead cook at home from scratch!
- Choose the fat free or low-fat options e.g. light mayonnaise
- Try healthier cooking methods like oven baking, grilling and steaming
- When cooking with oil, measure out the amount needed with a spoon instead of free pouring from the bottle

### TOP TIP

Try cooking with coconut oil or extra virgin olive oil

# PROTEIN

## HOW THEY ARE USED...

- Broken down into amino acids
- Builds, maintains and replaces the tissues in your body
- Important for developing strength and aiding recovery

Protein is constantly being used in the body, and since the body doesn't store protein, it is important that we eat protein little and often



## FACT

Meat, poultry, fish, eggs and dairy products are complete protein sources that provide all nine essential amino acids

## TIPS Think Lean Protein

Avoid full fat milk & instead use semi-skimmed/skimmed milk (less bad fat)

Stick with lean chicken/ turkey breast (avoiding the skin or visible fat) rather than darker meats

Enjoy plenty of oily fish such as salmon or mackerel for a healthy dose of lean protein & heart healthy omega 3 fatty acids

Choose low-fat cheeses like the essential protein rich cottage cheese.

## STAY CLEAR OF SUGAR

- Eating too much affects your blood sugar levels
- The short but brief burst of energy sugar gives you makes you feel tired, dizzy and moody
- A large sugar intake makes you more prone to put on weight

## SALT

¾ of the salt we eat is already in our food so there is no need in adding more. Eating too much salt raises blood pressure which can lead to bad heart health.

**TOP TIP** - Try unrefined Himalayan pink salt when seasoning food, this contains all the electrolytes

## PORTION SIZES

- People are all different shapes and sizes therefore everyone has different eating requirements

- Good way to roughly measure the best portion size for you is with your hands

A fistful hand is suggested portion size for carbohydrates



A flat palm is suggested a good portion size for meats and fish



Two cupped hands is together is a good portion size estimation for fruits and vegetables



# ANTIOXIDANTS VITAMINS & MINERALS

They act like your bodies own police force for your immune system as they provide protection, aid recovery and maintain good health.

Have at least 5 portions of vegetables/ salads per day and 1-2 portions of fruit (lower portions of fruit as when liver energy levels are full the fructose in fruit gets stored as fat).



## FACT

Antioxidants are still retained in the food no matter if they are fresh, frozen, canned, dried or juiced so they all still count

*Each colour provides its own unique antioxidant effects therefore eat a variety of fruit and vegetables each day*

# HYDRATION

In order for your body to properly function during basic everyday tasks you must ensure that you are adequately hydrated at all times.

Nearly all major systems in your body depend on water. It is the medium for all chemical reactions, including accessing stored energy from muscles and plays a major role in muscle growth.

The importance of hydration greatly increases as the physical and mental demands of training and games are added into your daily schedule.

**The amount of fluid you need during and after playing football depends on how much you sweat but everyday you should drink at least 8 glasses or 2 litres of fluid.**



Dehydration occurs when the amount of fluid leaving your body is greater than the amount of fluid you take in. Sweating is a physiological process and during physical activity becomes a major source of water loss from your body.

Quite simply dehydration will reduce your endurance levels, decrease your level of strength and can cause cramping. It can also impact negatively on your coordination, concentration and decision making throughout training & games.

### TOP TIP

Carry a bottle of water with you throughout the day to drink and refill as you go so that you can stay hydrated

Avoid caffeine as it is dehydrating e.g. coffee, breakfast, tea, energy drinks

Drink little and often

### Examples:



## FACT

**By the time you are thirsty, your body is already dehydrated**

### THE SYMPTOMS OF DEHYDRATION:

Lack of concentration and co-ordination

Dark coloured urine

Head aches and dizziness

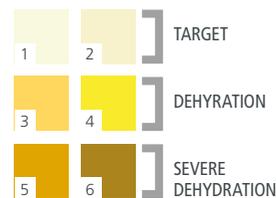
Dry mouth and throat

Weakness and early fatigue

Nausea

**TOP TIP** - Looking at the colour of your urine will help you determine how hydrated you are. The aim is to have pale straw coloured urine = good level of hydration!

### MONITERING HYDRATION



**Urine Chart**

# DAY 1 FUELING UP

## TODAY'S AIM

The day before the match is the time to make sure you fuel your body correctly. The aim is to ensure your muscle glycogen stores are full so you have plenty of energy to perform to the highest level throughout the game. It is also vitally important that you hydrate correctly which will help to avoid dehydration on the day of the game.

Breakfast	8:30am
Morning Snack	11:00am
Lunch	1:00pm
Afternoon Snack	3:30pm
Dinner	6:00pm
Evening Snack	9:00pm

### BREAKFAST

- 2 slices of wholegrain / rye bread with baked beans / scrambled eggs and grilled tomato / mushrooms
- Smoked salmon on granary bread spread with avocado or low-fat cream cheese
- Porridge made with semi-skimmed milk with honey & walnuts & dried apricots

### MORNING SNACK

- Low-fat yogurt (probiotic or Greek)
- Handful of brazil nuts & berries
- 2 kiwis / an orange / an apple

### LUNCH

- Large lentil & vegetable soup with slice of whole wheat bread.
- Wholegrain sandwich with ham / chicken / tuna & salad
- Large baked sweet potato with mild extra lean chilli / tuna / baked beans
- Whole-wheat cous cous / quinoa / whole-wheat pasta with grilled chicken & salad

### AFTERNOON SNACK

- Handful of hazelnuts & berries with low-fat yogurt
- 1 slice of whole-wheat pitta bread topped with tuna / chicken / ham & salad
- 1 slice of wholegrain bread topped with peanut butter & green tipped banana

### DINNER

- Turkey / extra lean beef burgers, oven baked sweet potato with a side salad / steamed vegetables
- Extra lean mince & whole-wheat spaghetti bolognese
- Chicken pesto whole-wheat pasta
- Salmon with quinoa / whole wheat cous cous & steamed vegetables
- Cod & oven baked sweet potato chips with a side salad
- Extra lean chilli con carne with brown basmati rice

### EVENING SNACK

- 3 whole-wheat oatcakes spread with cottage cheese & cucumber / tomatoes
- Hummus with carrots / cucumber
- Green tipped banana with natural yoghurt & almonds

Adjust the meal timings depending on what time you get up in the morning and your school/work breaks

# DAY 2 11AM KICK OFF MATCH DAY

## TODAY'S AIM

Pay attention to your food intake depending upon your kick off time. If the guide is followed correctly your muscles will be full of energy and ready to play to your maximum level. Today foods (pre-match) should contain slow releasing carbohydrates. These will ensure your muscles have the maximum amount of fuel available throughout your match.

Breakfast	7-8:00am
Snack (pre-match)	9:30am
Lunch (post-match meal)	1-2:30pm
Afternoon Snack	4-5:00pm
Dinner	7-8:00pm
Evening Snack	9:00pm

### BREAKFAST- PRE-MATCH MEAL (3-4 HOURS BEFORE MATCH)

- Porridge with semi-skimmed milk & honey
- Scrambled / poached eggs / soft boiled egg with rye / whole-wheat toast
- Baked beans / venison sausages with wholegrain toast
- 2 slices of whole-wheat toast with green tipped banana and peanut butter

### SNACK- PRE-MATCH (1-1.5 HOURS BEFORE MATCH)

- Low fat yogurt
- Tangerines / Green tipped banana
- Rice cake with peanut butter

Adjust the meal timings depending on what time you get up in the morning and your school/work breaks

### HALF TIME SNACK

- Jaffa cakes / small pack of jelly sweets (e.g. jelly babies) & plenty fluids

### LUNCH- POST-MATCH MEAL (30 MINUTES AFTER MATCH)

- Extra lean minced beef shepherds pie made with white potatoes
- White pasta with pesto & chicken
- Turkey steak & cous cous with salad
- Baguette / baked potato filled with chicken / tuna / prawns / baked beans & salad

### AFTERNOON SNACK

- Fruit and fibre cereal with milk
- Baked beans on whole wheat toast
- Low-fat yogurt, banana & dried apricots

### DINNER

- Chicken / lentil soup with wholegrain bread
- Whole-wheat sandwich with chicken / smoked salmon & low fat cream cheese & salad
- Sweet potato with baked beans / tuna / extra lean chilli
- Salmon/ turkey, avocado, brown rice salad

### EVENING SNACK

- Whole grain bread with peanut butter & green tipped banana
- Whole-wheat oatcakes & cottage cheese / humous
- Oatabix / Weetabix with semi skimmed milk & almonds

# DAY 2 3PM KICK OFF MATCH DAY

## TOP TIP

Post-match nutrition directly after the game is important to restore the energy that was used during the match. Fast-releasing carbohydrates and protein will help kick start your recovery by quickly restoring the glycogen levels in your muscles. It is also important that you replenish vital nutrients and rehydrate with fluids and electrolytes.

Breakfast	8:30am
Lunch (pre-match meal)	11-12pm
Snack (pre-match)	1-1:30pm
Snack (post-match)	5:00pm
Dinner (post-match)	6:00pm
Evening Snack	9:00pm

### BREAKFAST (LIGHT)

- Porridge with milk & dried apricots
- All Bran / Fruit and Fibre with milk
- Scrambled eggs with wholegrain toast
- Wholegrain toast with peanut butter / honey

### LUNCH- PRE-MATCH MEAL (3-4 HOURS BEFORE MATCH)

- Large chicken / tuna / egg sandwich on whole-wheat / gluten free bread
- Large baked sweet potato with baked beans / tuna
- Quinoa salad with chicken or salmon

Adjust the meal timings depending on what time you get up in the morning and your school/work breaks

### SNACK- PRE-MATCH (1-1.5 HOURS BEFORE MATCH)

- Low fat yogurt
- Tangerines / Green tipped banana
- Rice cake with peanut butter

### HALF TIME SNACK

- Jaffa cakes / small pack of jelly sweets (e.g. jelly babies) & plenty fluids

### SNACK- POST-MATCH (15-30 MINUTES AFTER MATCH)

- Jaffa Cakes & semi-skimmed milk
- Small bagel with peanut butter & semi-skimmed milk
- Rice crispies cereal bar & semi-skimmed milk
- Large chocolate milk shake

### DINNER

- Mexican fajitas with whole-wheat wraps
- Prawn stir fry with wholegrain basmati rice / rice noodles
- Extra lean beef meatballs with whole-wheat spaghetti
- Haddock / turkey steak & selection of steamed vegetables

### EVENING SNACK

- Whole grain bread with peanut butter & green tipped banana
- Whole-wheat oatcakes & cottage cheese / humous
- Weetabix with semi skimmed milk & almonds

# DAY 3 RECOVERY & IMMUNE BOOST

## TODAY'S AIM

The aim for the day after the match is to get your body back to full health and fitness! The key to recovery and repair is high levels of protein and antioxidants. So today, like every day, you should aim to have at least 5 portions of vegetables/salads and 1-2 portions of fruit. Breakfast however should be high in protein to kick-start the recovery process for the day!

Large Breakfast	8:00am
Small Morning Snack	11:00am
Large Lunch	1:00pm
Small Afternoon Snack	3:00pm
Light Dinner	6:00pm
Small Evening Snack	9:00pm

### BREAKFAST

- Wholegrain / rye bread with smashed avocado poached / soft boiled egg with venison sausages
- Porridge, semi-skimmed milk with honey, nuts & berries
- Ham, mushroom & spinach omelette with slice of wholegrain toast
- Grilled tomato with smoked salmon & scrambled egg on wholegrain pitta bread

### SNACK

- Small green tipped banana & peanut butter
- Large slice of mango/ plum and low-fat organic yogurt
- Dried fruit and nut mix

Adjust the meal timings depending on what time you get up in the morning and your school/work breaks

### LUNCH

- Vegetable packed extra lean beef lasagne
- Tuna, whole-wheat pasta bake with peppers and sweet corn
- Whole-wheat, vegetable packed spaghetti with extra lean beef bolognese
- Venison sausages with sweet potato mash & asparagus / selection of steamed vegetables
- Salmon with oven baked sweet potato chips & selection of steamed vegetables
- Sea bass with quinoa and broccoli / selection of steamed vegetables
- Lean turkey mince, brown rice & copped vegetables stuffed in peppers

### AFTERNOON SNACK

- Brazil nuts & pumpkins seeds mix
- Kiwi / berries & a probiotic yogurt
- Apple and peanut butter
- Oat cakes with cottage cheese

### DINNER

- Tuna / chicken pasta salad
- Vegetable soup with a slice of whole-wheat toast
- Mixed bean & turkey / smoked mackerel salad in a slice of whole-wheat pitta bread
- Chicken & avocado quinoa salad

### EVENING SNACK

- Slice of whole-wheat toast spread with cottage cheese
- Fruit and fibre / All Bran cereal with semi skimmed milk

# SURVIVAL GUIDE

## Don't Skip Breakfast

Breakfast recharges your brain and body for the day, helping you to become more efficient in just about everything you do. It improves your decision making, alertness and memory, keeping you at the top of your game both at school/work and football. If you are training, playing a match or are just out exercising it will provide your muscles with the energy required for the activity!

Breakfast skippers, on the other hand, are generally more irritable, moody and tire very easily. If you skip breakfast there may be more than 12 hrs between your evening snack and first meal of the day. Your muscles need glycogen for energy and will be depleted if you haven't eaten anything. Without breakfast you are effectively running on empty, like trying to start the car with no petrol. Breakfast is essential to refuel your energy levels in your muscles every day.

## Be Prepared – Know Your Day

When playing away matches it does not mean that you cannot continue to eat right. While fast food provides cheap and quick food it is unlikely that it will provide a suitable choice or any nutritional value for your body so stay clear of these and instead be prepared for your day! Make sure you have a clear understanding of what your day requires and have a think about whether your pre and post match meal and snack will be easily available. If not, prepare what you need for the day ahead (e.g. low-fat yogurts, bananas, wholegrain sandwiches, milkshakes, water etc) so that you provide your body with the correct fuel for both activity and recovery.

## Make Better Food Choices

We are surrounded by unhealthy foods especially at lunch times when we are free to wonder to the local fast food shops and supermarkets but this is the time where it is very important to make better food choices on your own. Food shops all make the products look attractive, easily available and if everyone else is eating them it can be easy to make poor food choices.

If you are buying your food at lunchtime try avoid any outside temptations and use your new nutritional knowledge to choose healthier options. (Refer to day 1, 2 and 3 for suggestions on healthy lunches and snacks). You should now be aware of some of the short and long term benefits for your health and football performance, respectively.

## Stay Hydrated

There may be occasions when you're feeling hungry right after you have eaten but really what is happening is that you're actually thirsty. Confusing hunger with thirst is very common as the symptoms of dehydration are the same of those of hunger! If you have eaten the right amount of food and are still getting cravings to eat, try drinking some fluid to see if that helps reduce the feelings of hunger.

Remember, if you are thirsty it is already too late! Thirst is your body's alarm to say you are dehydrated so drink regularly and stay ahead of the game!

## DON'T FORGET...

The food and drink you choose to consume is very important. A healthy dietary intake and a basic knowledge of nutrition not only raises your football performance but also helps establish good eating habits for life.

It is important to remember that no one food by itself is capable of providing all the nutrients needed to sustain good health, so eating a wide variety of food is essential.

Think slow releasing carbohydrates, lean proteins, good fats, a rainbow of antioxidants and hydrate, hydrate, hydrate!



**Nutrition Guide produced by:**

Katarina Ostojic  
*Abertay University Nutrition Student*

 [kostojic@ymail.com](mailto:kostojic@ymail.com)

**Supported by:**

Dave Sykes  
*Head of Physical Performance - Kilmarnock FC*

 [@drdavesykes](https://twitter.com/drdavesykes)

Chris Smith  
*Scottish FA Player & Coach Development Manager*

 [chris.smith@scottishfa.co.uk](mailto:chris.smith@scottishfa.co.uk)

 [@smiggy\\_13](https://twitter.com/smiggy_13)