

# Ready, Set, Go: Healthful Eating for Active Teens

**A**re you an athlete, cheerleader or dancer? Do you march in band, lug scenery backstage or get your 60 minutes of daily physical activity through volunteer work or walking, biking and other “lifestyle” activities? Whatever “moves” you, eating smart is your best fuel for action, brainpower, daily maintenance and growth.

## Fueling for Growth and Sports!

Planning your food choices helps you stay healthy and at a healthy weight.

- ♦ **Start with the food groups.** Your body needs lots of different nutrients: carbohydrates, protein, fat, vitamins, minerals and water. As fuel for fitness, eat enough variety from the five food groups (Grains, Vegetables, Fruits, Milk and Meat & Beans) in the right amounts to match your energy needs.
- ♦ **Snack sensibly.** Choose most snacks from the five food groups. Try whole-wheat crackers, cheese, veggies, fruit or nuts. Read Nutrition Facts labels and go easy on snacks high in fat and added sugars.
- ♦ **Make your beverages count.** Choose fat-free or low-fat milk with meals. If you drink juice, opt for one cup of 100% fruit juice per day. Milk and juice supply nutrients, not just calories. Sodas shouldn’t replace more nutritious beverages or foods. If you’re thirsty, drink water.

Go to [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) for tips on planning, tracking and judging your food and beverage choices.



(Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture)



Apple Nachos

## Eating for Peak Performance for Athletic Events

Ready to fuel up before, during or after you need to put in a peak performance? Your approach affects how well you perform.

- ♦ **Before you get moving:** Eat a high carbohydrate meal 3 or 4 hours before vigorous activity. It’s easy to digest and helps power your muscles. Eat until you’re satisfied, but not too full. If you need a little snack later, try fruit about 30 minutes before your event. Prepare by drinking enough fluids, too. Drink at least 2 cups of water about 2 to 2-1/2 hours ahead. Then drink 2 cups of water 15 minutes or less before your activity.
- ♦ **While you’re in action:** You probably don’t need to eat during competition or practice, unless it lasts longer than an hour. Then a break for a cereal bar, banana or other carbohydrate-rich food may do. More important, drink enough fluids: 1/2 cup of water every 15 minutes to avoid dehydration, muscle cramps or heat exhaustion.
- ♦ **When you’re done:** Drink plenty of fluids to replace what you lose through sweat. Water, sports drinks and fruit juice are all okay, but skip carbonated beverages. Within 1 to 4 hours, enjoy a high-carb meal with some protein and fat. Food, rather than salt tablets and electrolyte drinks, is the best way to replace electrolytes you lose by sweating.

## Eating Myths, Facts and Smart Moves

Nutrition myths and misinformation abound. Use the following “myth-breakers” to plan your nutrition approach.

- ♦ **Bulk up with exercise.** Loading up on protein foods or protein drinks won’t build your muscles. Your daily food choices probably supply all the protein you need. To build muscles, you need to work them. As you build muscles, nutrient-dense carbs are your best fuel.
- ♦ **Be smart about competitive weight goals.** Your competition weight should be based on your growth stage. If you’re a wrestler, gymnast or dancer, compete or perform at a weight that’s healthy for you. Manage your weight every day, not just before competition. Trying to crash diet, fast or sweat off

weight isn't healthy, and may cause dehydration and fatigue, which affect your performance.

❖ **Don't load up on carbs.** Carbohydrate loading (where athletes store extra carbohydrates in their bodies) isn't advised for teenagers. A wiser move is to eat a low-fat, high-carbohydrate meal a few hours before vigorous exercising. Remember, athletes who work out hard every

day need to eat a few extra carbs every day (because they need more fuel).

❖ **Eat smart, forget fads.** Unproven, supposedly effortless ways to build strength or reach your target weight aren't effective and may be harmful. Steer clear of these, even if celebrities or friends suggest them.

**Power up with smart nutrition, train sensibly and have a winning mindset to be your personal best. Here are some food ideas to get you started.**

### Apple Nachos

**Prep:** 5 minutes                      **Total:** 5 min.

6 TRISCUIT Reduced Fat Crackers  
 1/2 of a medium apple, cut into 6 slices  
 1 KRAFT 2% Milk American Singles, cut into 6 pieces  
 1/2 tsp. cinnamon sugar

**PLACE** crackers on microwaveable plate. Top with apple slices and 2% Milk Singles.

**MICROWAVE** on HIGH 30 sec. or until 2% Milk Singles are melted.

**SPRINKLE** with cinnamon sugar.

Makes 1 serving.

*Variation - Pear Nachos:* Substitute 1/2 of a medium pear, cut into 6 slices, for the apple.

**Nutrition Bonus:** The TRISCUIT Reduced Fat Crackers supply whole grains, are a good source of fiber and provide carbohydrates for energy. The KRAFT 2% Milk American Singles slice is high in calcium. This simple snack includes foods from three food groups.

**Nutrition Information Per Serving:** 190 calories, 6g total fat, 2.5g saturated fat, 10mg cholesterol, 420mg sodium, 31g carbohydrate, 5g dietary fiber, 11g sugars, 7g protein, 8%DV vitamin A, 6%DV vitamin C, 25%DV calcium, 8%DV iron.

**Exchange:** 1 Starch, 1 Fruit, 1 Meat (L)

### Cheesy Cinnamon French Toast

**Prep:** 5 minutes                      **Cook:** 11 minutes

2 slices cinnamon raisin bread  
 1 KRAFT 2% Milk Singles  
 1/4 cup cholesterol-free egg product

**TOP** one of the bread slices with 2% Milk Singles and second bread slice.

**DIP** sandwich in egg product, turning over to evenly coat both sides.

**COOK** in skillet or griddle sprayed with cooking spray on medium heat 3 min. on each side or until golden brown on both sides.

Makes 1 serving.

*Round Out The Meal:* Serve with 1 cup sliced fresh strawberries and an 8-oz. glass of fat free milk..

**Nutrition Bonus:** Enjoy two favorites, grilled cheese and French toast, combined in one delicious recipe. It is perfect for anytime of day and the 2% Milk Singles provides an excellent source of calcium.

**Nutrition Information Per Serving:** 250 calories, 7g total fat, 3g saturated fat, 10mg cholesterol, 600mg sodium, 29g carbohydrate, 2g dietary fiber, 5g sugars, 16g protein, 35%DV vitamin A, 0% DV vitamin C, 30%DV calcium, 15%DV iron.

**Exchange:** 2 Starch, 2 Meat (VL), 1/2 Fat

Dietary Exchanges based on *Exchange Lists for Meal Planning* © 2003 by the American Diabetes Association and the American Dietetic Association