

Special Olympics
Arkansas



Coaches Training Guide



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LESSON 1: HYDRATION





Promoting proper hydration in the athletes is important to their overall health and athletic performance. Drinking plenty of water:

- “ Lubricates joints
- “ Promotes healthy muscle tissue
- “ Helps maintain a normal body temperature (especially important in summer and winter!)
- “ Reduces muscle cramping
- “ Reduces fatigue, light headedness, dizziness
- “ Reduces risk of heat related illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke
- “ Gives athletes more energy because it aids in the transport of nutrients

For general health, the recommendation is half an ounce to one ounce per pound of body weight. For example, if you weigh 200 lbs., you should drink between 100 . 200 ounces of water per day.

ACTION PLAN FOR COACHES

- “ Ask athletes to drink a glass of water (20 oz.) the hour prior to practice.
- “ Make sure water is available at training site.
- “ Encourage athletes to bring their refillable water bottle to all practices and events. Make it part of their gear.
- “ Take frequent water breaks during practice, at least every 20 minutes and more during vigorous activity.
- “ Direct athletes to refill their bottles before leaving and drink immediately after practice.

WATCH OUT FOR SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION

- “ Light headedness, dizziness, fainting
- “ Muscle cramping
- “ Nausea and vomiting
- “ Heart racing and dry mouth

Sports drinks contain unneeded calories and some contain up to 10 teaspoons of sugar. They have no benefits over water in most circumstances. Water is best!

LESSON 2: NUTRITION





Part 1 - Making good choices daily

Nutrition is one of the most important factors in determining the status of a person's health. We must fuel our bodies to live, and how we do so affects our energy level, athletic performance, body composition, mood, and either contributes to or helps to prevent chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease.

Our goal with the Healthy Athletes program is to promote healthy behaviors through educating the athletes and teaching them the skills to make good choices for themselves.

HEALTHY EATING IN 2 STEPS

1 - BALANCE every meal with choices from the food groups:

- “ Protein
- “ Vegetables and Fruits
- “ Whole grain
- “ Fat
- “ Dairy

This method will provide all three essential macronutrients: protein, carbohydrate, and fat.



2 - Choose **WHOLE FOODS** the majority of the time. This means food in its natural form and unprocessed. These foods often have one ingredient and are located in the perimeter of the grocery store. Choosing whole food sources minimizes intake of excess sugars, sodium, preservatives, Trans fats, and other additives that not only add unneeded calories to meals, but also can negatively affect health. Whole foods are nutrient dense (lots of nutrients and lower in calories), provide the digestive system with the fiber it needs, and provides vital micronutrients (vitamins and minerals). Examples of whole foods in each food group are:

- “ **PROTEIN** - Lean meats, fish, beans and peas, nuts and nut butters, dairy products such as low fat cheese, milk, and yogurt, eggs, soy, quinoa
- “ **FRUIT** - Apples, Oranges, Cherries, Bananas, Grapefruit, Kiwi, Pears, Grapes, Strawberries, Blueberries, Mango, Melons
- “ **VEGETABLES** - Spinach, Kale, Cabbage, Broccoli, Celery, Greens, Peppers, Cucumbers, Squash, Tubers (potatoes), Legumes (beans)
- “ **WHOLE GRAINS** - Rice, Oats, Whole kernel corn, Popcorn, Corn on the cob, Rye, Barley, Buckwheat, 100% Whole grain pastas and breads
- “ **FATS** . Olive oil, Avocados, Almonds, Peanut and Almond butter, Seeds, Olives, Flax, Salmon, and Whole eggs
- “ **DAIRY** - 2%, 1%, or skim milk, Greek yogurt, Low fat cheese, cottage cheese

One day example:

<p>Breakfast</p>	<p>Protein / Dairy: 1 cup of Greek yogurt Fat: 1 tablespoon peanut butter Fruit: 1 cup strawberries Whole Grain: ¼ cup whole grain granola (372 calories, 30g P, 40g C, 10g F, 7g Fiber)</p>
<p>Snack 1</p>	<p>Protein / Fat: hummus Vegetable: carrots and celery</p>
<p>Lunch</p>	<p>Protein: turkey Vegetable: lettuce and tomato Dairy: slice reduced fat colby jack cheese Fat: ½ avocado Whole Grain: 2 slices 100% whole wheat bread Fruit: 1 apple (436 calories, 24g P, 50g C, 17g Fat, 12g Fiber)</p>
<p>Snack 2</p>	<p>Vegetable: 1 cup broccoli floret, ½ red bell pepper Dairy: 4 tablespoon light sour cream Hidden Valley Ranch Dip packet (1 teaspoon) (Snack 1 & 2: 233 calories, 10g P, 26g C, 10g Fat, 8g Fiber)</p>
<p>Dinner</p>	<p>Protein: 3 oz. lean ground beef (taco seasoned), ½ cup pinto beans Vegetable: diced tomato, shredded lettuce, peppers Dairy: reduced fat shredded cheese Fat: black olives Whole Grain: 100% whole wheat tortilla Fruit: cantaloupe for dessert (609 calories, 36g P, 64g C, 21g F, 10g Fiber)</p>



DAILY TOTAL

Calories	1650	
Protein	100g	for building muscle
Carbohydrate	180g	for energy
Fat	60g	for energy, vitamin absorption, and more
Fiber	37g	for digestion and satiety

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Athletes with dietary restrictions and / or food allergies should always follow the guidance of their doctor and registered dietitian.

Part 2 - Nutrition around Athletic Training and Events

The athlete's nutrition around practices and competitions will have a significant impact on their performance and recovery. In addition to making healthy choices daily, learning how to plan a pre-workout and post-workout meal is important.

ACTION PLAN FOR COACHES

Pre-workout = Instruct athletes to consume a lean protein source and a complex carbohydrate 1 - 1.5 hours before training or competing.

Examples of excellent pre-workout carbs include but are not limited to:

Sweet Potatoes	Oatmeal
Brown rice	Whole grain/low sugar cereal
Whole grain pasta	Fruit
Whole grain bread	WASA crackers

Post-workout = Instruct the athletes to consume a lean protein and more carbohydrates within the hour after a training session. Immediately following a workout is the most favorable time for consuming carbohydrates. The body uses them to refill glycogen stores and along with protein, to repair and build muscle.

Examples of excellent post-workout carbohydrates include:

Bananas	Cereal with 1% or skim milk
Other fruit	Rice

100% Whole wheat bread with lean protein
LOW FAT CHOCOLATE MILK - Known to be an excellent recovery drink

Part 3 - Nutrition and healthy weight management

The best way to maintain a healthy weight is through a balanced diet and exercise. If a person consumes more calories than they expend, they will gain weight. If a person consumes less calories than they expend, they will lose weight.

ACTION PLAN FOR COACHES

Here are some tips that coaches may share with athletes that will improve their overall food quality and also result in consuming fewer calories, i.e. weight loss.

- **Limit or avoid simple sugars .**

Sugary products such as soda and candy are high in calories and provide no nutrients. Encourage athletes to avoid or limit these items by replacing them with healthy choices. Instead of soda, try lemon water. Instead of candy, try fresh berries (nature's candy!)

- **Limit or avoid processed "junk" food -**

Chips, sweets, candy bars, pastries...etc. These items do not contribute beneficial nutrients; they contribute high amounts of sugar, saturated and Trans fat, and salt, all of which contribute to chronic health problems and obesity

- **Use the nutrition guide .**

Teach the athletes healthy options to replace unhealthy ones. For instance, during the announcements at the close of practice, ask the athletes to tell you about a healthy snack that they had that week. Ask them if they can name a healthy carbohydrate food and pair it with a protein food. A simple conversation can get them thinking about making good choices for the rest of the day

- **Portion control -**

Your palm determines your protein portions

Your fist determines your veggie portions

Your cupped hand determines your carb portions

Your thumb determines your fat portions

Knowing these simple methods of measuring portion control can give the athletes an idea of how much they should eat at each meal

- **Be a role model of good nutrition -**

Tell the athletes that when they take care of their bodies, their bodies will take care of them. If you bring food to a practice or event, make sure that it is something that you would recommend for them to eat. Model drinking water instead of soda, and demonstrate what healthy eating looks like because they will be watching!

LESSON 3: FITNESS



Part 1 – Fit for Life: Year-round physical activity

The best thing an athlete can do to improve their athleticism is to strive to stay fit year-round. Staying fit year-round will decrease their risk of injury while competing, help them to maintain a healthy weight, decrease the risk for chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes, and improve their mental and emotional health as well. Getting enough physical activity can also decrease the risk of:

- “ Early death
- “ Coronary heart disease
- “ Stroke
- “ High blood pressure
- “ Type 2 diabetes
- “ Breast and colon cancer
- “ Falls
- “ Depression

And also:

- “ Improve bone health.
- “ Improve cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness.
- “ Decrease levels of body fat.
- “ Reduce symptoms of depression.

Current Federal Guidelines for Physical Activity: (Source Health.gov)

The Guidelines recommend that children and adolescents ages 6 to 17 do 60 minutes (1 hour) or more of physical activity each day. That includes:

- “ **Aerobic Activity:** Most of the 60 or more minutes a day should be either moderate- or vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity (such as running, dancing, or biking), and include vigorous-intensity physical activity at least 3 days a week
- “ **Muscle-Strengthening:** As part of the 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, include muscle-strengthening physical activity (such as climbing trees, using playground equipment, or lifting weights) on at least 3 days of the week
- “ **Bone-Strengthening:** As part of the 60 or more minutes of daily physical activity, include bone-strengthening physical activity (such as running or jumping rope) on at least 3 days of the week



Guidelines for Adults:

- “ 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) each week of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity (such as brisk walking or tennis)
- “ 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) each week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity (such as jogging or swimming laps)
- “ An equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity
- “ Do muscle-strengthening activities (such as lifting weights or using resistance bands) that are moderate or high intensity and involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week.

ACTION PLAN FOR COACHES

- “ Incorporate exercise into practices. See planning section.
- “ Athletes' daily checklist includes physical activity.
- “ Ask them what they did the week prior and what they plan to do this week.
- “ Suggestions could be walking every day for 30 minutes to an hour and doing the Special Olympics Arkansas Workout every other day for strength and resistance training.

Part 2 - Warm-up, Cool-down, and the Special Olympics Arkansas Workout

WARM-UP

A good warm-up gets the body ready for physical activity -- muscles, joints, and nervous system. It sets the athlete up for a good practice, and reduces the risk of injury. The warm-up can be done by the athlete before every workout out at home and together as a team before workout or practice.

*see video link

*see Appendix for list of warm-up exercises

COOL-DOWN

A good cool-down will allow the heart rate to lower gradually, and it incorporates stretching as well.

*see video link

*see Appendix for list of cool-down exercises

THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS ARKANSAS TOTAL BODY WORKOUT

*see video link

*see Appendix for list of exercises

The workout is in the same 20 seconds of work and 10 seconds rest format with 8 rounds. This workout is to challenge the athlete by picking up the intensity. The athlete should only go as fast as he/she can with good movement patterns (see special notes on progression priorities and see video for workout, coaching the workout, and modifications.) Every round = 20 seconds of work followed by 10 seconds of rest

LESSON 4: INJURY PREVENTION



Be Prepared

- Make sure the environment is safe for athletes. (Wet grass, slippery pavement, inclement weather, and heat can be a safety issue.)
- Have athlete medical forms on hand for reference and emergency contacts.
- Carry a first aid kit.
- Be aware of any previous or current injury, restrictions from doctor, and alert to warning signs such as:
 - Chest pain
 - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
 - Dizziness or lightheadedness
 - Headache
 - Fatigue
 - Pain
 - Rash
 - Muscle soreness
 - Itchiness
 - Numbness
 - Tingling
 - Weakness
 - Changes in coordination

Warm-Up

This time is crucial for injury prevention and must not be skipped, especially before strenuous activity.

Cool-Down

Allow the athletes the time to slowly bring their heart rate down and stretch out their muscles after a workout or practice.

Safe Progression of Movement

In the Special Olympics Arkansas Workout, review the videos for points of performance to look for, modifications, and tips on cueing the athletes during this workout. The priorities on progression should be as follows:

- “ 1st priority - Full range of motion with modified movement, accurate movement pattern
- “ 2nd priority - Strive for the minimum number of reps per movement before moving to advanced movement
- “ 3rd priority - Strive for advanced movement
- “ 4th priority - Speed/ Intensity - After all above conditions are met, then and only then should the athlete be encouraged go faster.

Hydrate

Follow guidelines in Hydration section. Dehydration can lead to injury.

Use Caution

Stop activity if there is pain.

Gear Up for Success

Make sure athletes wear the right gear including weather appropriate clothing.

Think Overall Health

Promote overall health by encouraging the athletes to eat well, keep up their exercises at home and get enough rest so that they can be the best athletes they can be. General fitness prevents injury!

Resource for sport specific injury prevention -

<http://www.stopsportsinjuries.org/sportsinjury-prevention/athletes-resources.aspx>

LESSON 5: ATHLETE ATTIRE AND PERSONAL CARE





Athletes must be dressed appropriately for their safety. An athlete who is dressed well will perform better and be more confident in their sport.

APPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR: (i.e. running shoes for athletes; figure skates for figure skating, bowling shoes for bowling, etc.) **AT NO TIME ARE STREET SHOES TO BE WORN FOR TRAINING AND COMPETITION ACTIVITIES.**

APPROPRIATE UNIFORMS: (i.e. leotards for gymnastics; jerseys for softball; running singlets and shorts for athletics) **AT NO TIME ARE BLUE JEANS, BLUE JEANS SHORTS OR CUT-OFFS APPROPRIATE FOR TRAINING AND COMPETITION ACTIVITIES.**

APPROPRIATE SEASONAL DRESS: (i.e. light-weight, cotton clothes for summer sports; appropriate head cover; mittens/gloves and warm clothes for ice skating) **AT NO TIME IS IT APPROPRIATE TO HAVE ATHLETES TRAINING IN THE HOT SUN WITH JEANS/OR THICK WARMUPS.**

Athletes must also train and compete with the appropriate athletic equipment for the safest and most meaningful participation possible. Each Special Olympics sport has its own specifications for both required and recommended attire and equipment, with listings available in the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules Book.



HYGIENE

Addressing hygiene can be a sensitive subject. As a health role model and coach, there are ways to help an athlete with personal care issues with concern for their emotional well-being.

ACTION PLAN FOR COACHES:

- Emphasize the importance of cleanliness to the group for infection and disease control. Regular showering with soap from head to toe helps to reduce bacteria that can cause infections in cuts and scrapes (Staph) and viruses (Flu season).
- Hand washing should also be stressed. Let the athletes know that staying clean can help them stay healthy so that they can compete!
- Athletes should not share personal items that come in contact with the skin. Avoid sharing soaps, towels, razors and equipment.
- Implement routine cleaning schedules for shared equipment.

In the case of problems with attire and hygiene, reach out to the area director for assistance with getting an athlete the items that they need.

LESSON 6: THE ROLE OF A COACH



Part 1 – All eyes on me: Leading by example with healthy behaviors

A Special Olympics Arkansas coach does more than just teach a sport. A coach is a role model, a leader, a resource person, and a motivator.

Characteristics of a great coach include:

- “ Role modeling appropriate attire and good personal care
- “ Role modeling healthy diet choices in the presence of athletes. For example, to stress the importance of a healthy diet and hydration to the athletes, bring water to practice instead of soda. They are watching; Walk the walk!
- “ Awareness - If it comes to your attention that an athlete has needs that are not being met. Ask a director for help
- “ Consistent - Present, on time, ready to practice
- “ Organized - Planned practice that is beneficial to athletes
- “ Positive direction - lead with a good attitude - A positive attitude feeds itself

Part 2 – Goal setting

Setting goals is one of the most important aspects of coaching athletes to bring out their full potential in sports. SMART goals are:

- “ Specific
- “ Measurable
- “ Attainable
- “ Realistic
- “ Time-related

Example of a general goal vs. a smart goal:

General goal = stronger upper body vs. SMART goal = Try to do 2 additional pushups each week during workout until goal of 20 is reached.

Helping athletes set and achieve goals is very rewarding to both the athlete and the coach.

Part 3 – Communication

Being a good communicator is so important for effective coaching. Attention, good eye contact, and clear instruction are key. Give positive feedback for good performance efforts, and clear, corrective instruction and encouragement after performance mistakes. Avoid unnecessary distractions, such as cell phone use, during practices and events.

Part 4 – Planning:

One hour is the recommended amount of time for practice for most sports. The practice should include time for warming up, cooling down/ stretching, and a workout in addition to the specific sport training.

A successful practice may look like this:

The Special Olympics Arkansas general warmup (6 min 1.5 Tabata Songs)

Sport Specific Training - continued warmup of appropriate mechanics, drills, instruction, and practice (45 minutes)

The Special Olympics Arkansas Workout (4 min Tabata Song: Strength/ Conditioning at an intensity that challenges the individual athlete)

The Special Olympics Arkansas Cooldown/ Stretches - (4 min Tabata Song)

Appendix A

Warm-up Exercise List: see video for instruction and demonstration

Reach up, Knee Up
Inchworms
Trunk twists
Jumping Jacks
Zombie Walks
Squat Thrust Stand
Windmills
Dynamic Lunges
Hugs
Slow squats (sit back in chair and stand)
Arm circles (big and small)
Plank

Cool-down exercise list

Side bends with Arms up
Lunge Stretch 10 seconds each side
Baby squat stretch (back against a wall)
Chest opener (using wall)
Shoulder stretch (using wall)
Back twists (seated, hugging knee)
Straddle stretch middle
Straddle stretch (10 seconds each side)

Workout exercise list

Squats with body weight Full
Sit-ups
Push-ups
Side shuffle
Up Downs with Jump (burpees)
Walking Lunges
Plank
Superman

Appendix B

Free Nutrition apps

- MyFitnessPal . counts daily calories and macronutrients
- Calorie Counter by Fat Secret . counts daily calories and macronutrients
- Shopwell . rates foods and specific grocery items according to nutritional needs in your profile
- HealthyOut Healthy Meal Finder . helps find healthy meals at nearby restaurants
- Waterlogged . tracks daily water intake

Free Fitness apps

- C25K (Couch to 5K) by RunDouble . running coach for 5k training
- JEFIT Workout Exercise Trainer . 1300 exercises with animations, standard fitness tracking
- Runtastic Running and Fitness . GPS tracking with graphs
- MapMyRun . also GPS tracker for running

Health information websites

- <http://www.cdc.gov/> - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/> - Choose My Plate for nutrition
- <http://healthfinder.gov/> - Health Finder - news and various health topics
- <http://www.who.int/topics/en/> - World Health Organization - news and various health topics
- www.health.gov . guidelines, multi-topic