



Chapter 12: Nutrition

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When we think of nutrition in the context of BKL aged children, it's important to remember that we do not need to do anything out of the ordinary to make sure our kids are getting the nutrition they need. Simple, healthy choices and a well balanced diet will go a long way to make sure your child has the energy and nutrients they need.

Instead of thinking of nutrition in terms of limiting factors, we want to look at prioritizing healthy choices and eating what makes your body feel good. We will still go into some helpful pointers for each meal below, but remember these are only guidelines and there is no tried and true formula that works for every child.

Ideal selections of food for children should provide a mix of carbohydrates, protein, and fat. Traditional thinking is that carbohydrates should make up the majority of a diet (55-65%), with smaller amounts of protein (10-20%) and fat (15-35%). But nutrition should never be taken out of context. The most important thing is to make sure your child is getting enough of what they need, and that they have a positive relationship with food and their body. Mealtimes should be fun and relaxing. Healthy, pleasurable food choices should not be viewed as a training tool but rather habits that enrich your life.

Breakfast

Often called the “most important meal of the day,” a well rounded breakfast is key for the body AND the brain, so be sure to help your child create a morning routine that includes breakfast each day. Skipping breakfast can lead to low energy and fatigue, and breakfast should include a mix of carbohydrates combined with sources of proteins and fats for long lasting energy.

Oatmeal and cereal are good easy options for breakfast. Some folks even refer to winter as *oatmeal season!* High marks also go to high-fiber cold cereals. To boost the flavor of oatmeal try adding your own mix of nuts, seeds, and fresh or dried fruits. Raisins, bananas, sunflower seeds, and almonds all work well. Milk (dairy or non-dairy) with cereal is a good choice too. In addition to providing nutrients of its own, milk helps boost the protein power of grains.

Whole grain breads, english muffins, and bagels can provide the foundation for a quick, tasty breakfast that's portable enough to eat on the go. Spread them with nut butter or cream cheese and you're off. Pancakes, waffles, and french toast are also energy-packed breakfast choices. For



extra health benefits, select buckwheat flour, bran, or whole grain varieties. Topping them with fruit, yogurt, or nut butters is a great way to get some added nutritional value.

Eggs are a great source of protein, and on a chilly morning it can feel good to eat a warm breakfast. Boiled, poached, scrambled, fried or in an omelet, eggs are a complete protein and a great option for breakfast. Greek yogurt is also a high protein breakfast option and fruit smoothies with yogurt are an easy breakfast option to prepare and transport. They are also easy to digest and liquid calories can sometimes be easier to consume if morning appetite is low.

Lunch

Lunch is a critical time to replenish your body after expending energy in the morning whether at school or at ski/sport training, and it sets you up for feeling good through the afternoon. Many times BKL practice or other athletic events take place after school and what your child eats for lunch will be directly related to how they feel for their afternoon activity. If a child reports an upset stomach, perhaps it's time to look more closely at what they had for lunch. On the other hand, if a child is feeling great when they ski chances are they are eating the right thing for lunch.

Sandwiches with whole grain bread are a good lunch option. Fill them with meat, veggies, hummus, or peanut butter and jelly. Truly the options are endless and you can let your child be involved in choosing what they like. Salads are a great lunch option with some added protein and carbs. Lunch meats, chickpeas, tuna, cooked grains, and chicken are all healthy and easy additions to a salad. Leftovers from dinner are great for lunch as well. Pastas, grains, veggie dishes, sweet potatoes, and grilled meats are all good the next day and make for yummy lunch additions.

The main thing to remember with lunch (and all meals) is that what your child is eating should taste good and make them feel good. There is no problem with having dessert after lunch, or eating pizza and burgers. Just be sure they are also getting enough fruits, veggies, and whole grains. Think of nutrition in terms of prioritizing healthy items instead of limiting what you may consider unhealthy.

If you are packing your child's lunch, consider adding some healthy snacks or items that can be eaten on the go like carrot sticks, nuts, fruit, granola bars, or trail mix. They may get hungry before practice and will also need a post practice snack to help them quickly refuel their energy stores (more on that later).



Dinner

Dinner gives children a chance to replenish any nutrient and calorie loss after a day full of activity. Since muscle glycogen can be rebuilt overnight, carbohydrates are a great nutritional option at dinner and later in the evening. Protein and fat intake is necessary to make up for the extra energy expended during a long day of skiing or playing outside. Evening snacks can help rebuild nutrient and energy stores too.

The same principles that apply to the other meals apply here. Be sure your child is getting enough food and that they are eating a mix of carbohydrates, protein, and fat. Meats, vegetables, salads, pastas, grains, and beans are all good dinner options. A good guideline is to make sure your child's plate is multicolored. Think about what's fresh and in season in terms of vegetables and use those when you can.

Snacks

Snacks are essential for children whether they participate in athletics or not. In a day full of school and activities it can sometimes feel like a long time between the three standard meals of the day. Healthy snacks can add essential calories that your child needs to keep them energized throughout the day. If you are packing your child's food, think about packing "lunch and a half" so they have enough food at lunch as well as some snack options for later in the day.

Post Practice Snack: Muscles are most receptive to replenishing glycogen (energy) and protein (to build muscle) fifteen minutes to one hour after activity. Because of this, it's key to have a snack available for your child after they ski. Either pack your child a snack in the morning, or have something ready in the car when you pick them up from skiing. Half a sandwich, a banana and peanut butter, granola bar, or a bag of trail mix are all good easy options for a post practice snack. Even beverages like milk, chocolate milk, soy milk, or fruit smoothies can be great post-practice snacks to help refuel glycogen and protein. Also, sometimes children are not hungry after training and liquids are easier to tolerate.

Hydration

Water makes up about 60-70% of body weight depending on age, and is constantly being lost from the body throughout the day. Because of this, make sure your child has access to water all day. Children don't always recognize the early stages of thirst, which can make them prone to dehydration especially during an endurance activity like skiing.

Children should always have a water bottle with them at practice. Coaches/leaders should encourage children to drink water on breaks during practice and when finishing up a long ski.



Club leaders can also use email lists or other caregiver/parent communications to make sure caregivers/parents are sending their child to practice with a water bottle.

Hydration Facts:

- In one hour of activity the body can lose up to 1 liter of water (almost one quart) depending on heat and humidity.
- One pint of water equals a pound. Just remember: “A pint’s a pound the world around.” For every pound of body weight you lose in a day, chances are good that you’ve lost a pint of water. Drink up!
- Being just a little dehydrated means a rise in body temperature during exercise, which means your heart rate goes up slightly, and you breathe harder while going slower.
- A dehydrated person can lose 5-10% of their performance capability.
- Once you become dehydrated it takes a minimum of 6 hours to restore hydration and up to 20 hours if you are seriously dehydrated.

What to do:

- Sip water all day everyday and keep your tank “topped-off”
- Carry water bottles to class, around the house, everywhere you go
- Be very intentional about your fluid consumption
- Do not share water bottles
- Always bring water to practice

Health & Nutrition Resources

- **Sunn Idrett (translated)** – the Sports Nutrition section has lots of good articles and recommendations. This website takes a more “proactive” approach with ideas of what good, positive nutrition can look like. Link: <https://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=no&u=https://sunnidrett.no/&prev=search&pto=aue>.
- **Emily Program Resources** – videos and articles spanning a wide range of topics from disordered eating to body image. Link: <https://www.emilyprogram.com/resources>.
- **With All: What to Say** – after taking a pledge to end harmful diet/weight talk, you’ll have access to a library of materials that can be specific to athletes, parents, or coaches on “What to Say” in certain situations around diet, weight, and body image talk. Link: <https://www.whattosaynow.org/>.
- **Development Nutrition Factsheets:**
 - Fueling 101: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fY5B_2-hTt9wYK8Q6Mn3ycEvKwFoV-tW/view
 - Fueling to Win: Race Day Nutrition Tips: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8PVQgUFDMmERoI2RWl5UHZJNjg/view?resourcekey=o-J5rPflPNFRXRuWzMonQ7oQ>



- [Fueling for Multiple Events: Sample Meal Plan:](#)
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1d1I-i9g7UIkUaxZJkJBRk1VUDOmu6Vv/view>
- [Hydration 101:](#)
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LWCoN1ctjPiRfMtevrZAdfaX2TVLawtF/view>
- [Recovery 101:](#)
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yEjvspx9Y9eMvBolax4ImH-loIbvdzXX/view>
- **Additional Resources Available Here:** <https://nensa.net/health-nutrition-resources/>