

DEVELOP THE ATHLETE FOOD GUIDE

THE ATHLETE'S GUIDE TO BETTER EATING



You're growing, so never go hungry!!!

The Power of Food

These foods will propel you toward your goals. They have been proven to do one or more of the following:

Build muscle
Fight cancer

Strengthen bone
Fight heart disease

Lower blood pressure
Improves immune function

1) Almonds and Other Nuts

Eat them with skins intact.

Superpowers

Building muscle, fighting food cravings

Secret weapons Protein, monounsaturated fats, vitamin E, folate (in peanuts), fiber, magnesium, and phosphorus

Fight against Obesity, heart disease, muscle loss, cancer

Sidekicks Pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, avocados

Impostors Salted or smoked nuts. High sodium spikes blood pressure.

2) Beans and Other Legumes

Including soybeans, chickpeas, pinto beans, navy beans, kidney beans, and lima beans.

Superpowers Building muscle, helping burn fat, regulating digestion

Secret weapons Fiber, protein, iron, folate

Fight against Obesity, colon cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure

Sidekicks Lentils, peas, bean dips, hummus, edamame

Impostors Refried beans, which are high in saturated fats; baked beans, which are high in sugar.

3) Spinach and Other Green Vegetables

Superpowers Neutralizing free radicals (molecules that accelerate the aging process)

Secret weapons Vitamins A, C, and K; folate; beta-carotene; minerals including calcium and magnesium; fiber

Fight against Cancer, heart disease, stroke, obesity, and osteoporosis

Sidekicks Cruciferous vegetables like broccoli and Brussels sprouts; green, yellow, red, and orange vegetables such as asparagus, peppers, and yellow beans

Impostors None, as long as you don't fry them or smother them in fatty cheese sauces.

4) Dairy Products (Soy milk as an alternative, for those who are lactose intolerant)

Fat-free or low-fat milk, yogurt, cheese, and cottage cheese.

Superpowers Building strong bones, firing up weight loss

Secret weapons Calcium, vitamins A and B12, riboflavin, phosphorus, potassium

Fight against Osteoporosis, obesity, high blood pressure, cancer

Sidekicks Soy

Impostors Whole milk, frozen yogurt

5) Oatmeal

Unsweetened, unflavored. But do add a little brown sugar or honey to flavor and all the fruit you want!

Superpowers Boosting energy, reducing cholesterol, maintaining blood-sugar levels

Secret weapons Complex carbohydrates and fiber

Fights against Heart disease, diabetes, colon cancer, obesity

Sidekicks High-fiber cereals like All-Bran and Fiber One

Impostors Sugary cereals

6) Eggs

Superpowers Building muscle, burning fat

Secret weapons Protein, vitamins A and B12

Fight against Obesity

Sidekicks Egg Beaters, which have fewer calories than eggs and no fat, but just as much of the core nutrients

Impostors None

More and more research shows that eating an egg or two a day will not raise your cholesterol levels, so drop the yolk and have a 3 or 4 egg white, with one yolk, omelet. In fact, we've learned that most blood cholesterol is made by the body from dietary fat, not dietary cholesterol. That's why you should take advantage of eggs and their powerful makeup of protein.

7) Turkey and Other Lean Meats

Lean steak, chicken, fish.

Superpowers Building muscle, improving the immune system

Secret weapons Protein, iron, zinc, creatine (beef), omega-3 fatty acids (fish), vitamins B6 (chicken and fish) and B12, phosphorus, potassium

Fight against Obesity, mood disorders, memory loss, heart disease

Sidekicks Shellfish, Canadian bacon, omega-3 rich flaxseed

Impostors Sausage, bacon, cured meats, ham, fatty cuts of steak like T-bone and rib eye

8) Peanut Butter (All-natural, sugar-free. The ingredient list should read as follows: Peanuts, (sea) salt. NOTHING ELSE)

Superpowers Boosting testosterone, building muscle, burning fat

Secret weapons Protein, monounsaturated fat, vitamin E, niacin, magnesium

Fights against Obesity, muscle loss, wrinkles, cardiovascular disease

Sidekicks Cashew and almond butters

Impostors Mass-produced sugary and trans fatty peanut butter

Yes, PB has its disadvantages: It's high in calories, and it isn't served in four-star restaurants. But it's packed with heart-healthy monounsaturated fats that can increase your body's production of testosterone, which can help muscles grow and fat melt. Three tablespoons a day should guarantee the benefit without overloading on the fat.

9) Olive Oil

Superpowers Lowering cholesterol, boosting the immune system

Secret weapons Monounsaturated fat, vitamin E

Fights against Obesity, cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure

Sidekicks Canola oil, peanut oil, sesame oil

Impostors Other vegetable and hydrogenated vegetable oils, trans fatty acids, margarine

No need for a long explanation here: Olive oil and its brethren will help control your food cravings; they'll also help you burn fat and keep your cholesterol in check.

10) Whole-Grain Breads and Cereals

Superpowers Preventing your body from storing fat

Secret weapons Fiber, protein, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin E, calcium, magnesium, potassium, zinc

Fight against Obesity, cancer, high blood pressure, heart disease

Sidekicks Brown rice, whole-wheat pretzels, whole-wheat pastas

Impostors Processed products like white bread, bagels, and doughnuts; breads labeled wheat instead of whole wheat

11) Raspberries and Other Berries

Superpowers Protecting your heart, enhancing eyesight, improving memory, preventing cravings

Secret weapons Antioxidants, fiber, vitamin C, tannins (cranberries)

Fight against Heart disease, cancer, obesity

Sidekicks Most other fruits, especially apples and grapefruit

Impostors Sugary jellies

12) Water, Juice and other good Beverages

Superpowers Nearly 75% of your body is water, keep it running efficiently. Water, like oil in a car, keeps everything moving smoothly and operating at its highest capacity.

Fights against Fatigue. Times when you feel tired, you may just be dehydrated. Fends off sickness and much more.

Sidekicks All natural/Organic fruit juices with NO added sugar, syrup, etc...

Impostors Soda/Juices with High Fructose Corn Syrup or Syrup of any kind. Ingredients in juices should read one line only with nothing more than fruits added and possibly added vitamin enrichment.

You'll notice that there are no supplements or mass produced foods here. I encourage everyone, including parents and siblings to use this as a framework for better eating. I know it is hard to give up those sweets, salty foods and fast foods for instance so make it a treat and leave those foods out of the house so you have to go get an ice cream down the street or take the time to drive to the grocery store to pick up the ingredients. I am not telling you to give up everything that is "bad" but rather make it that once a week or every other week treat that you splurge on

Lastly, I do recommend for the growing athlete, especially the ones that participate in a great deal of athletic competition to discuss with their Physician the option of adding whey protein to a young man's or woman's diet (as well as adults). It is a great, low calorie snack (post workout drink) that is crucial for recovery. Find your flavor (chocolate, vanilla or strawberry) and add water (or do half water and half milk/soymilk). For on the fly nutrition, try "Muscle Milk Light". **This is a great replacement for a player that might not be able to get a well balanced meal within 45 minutes to an hour post game/practice. Otherwise, stick with the well balanced meal!**