



Basic Nutrition Guide for Basketball Players

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A note from Alan

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In order to truly achieve your potential on the court, it is imperative you develop healthy eating habits. The following information serves as a very basic nutritional guide for putting you on the right path. For an in depth look at your eating habits you should contact a Registered Dietician (RD) or sports nutritionist. It is important to understand there are no evil foods; any food can be incorporated into your diet in moderation. However, to maximize your performance you should try and drastically reduce your intake of refined sugars (cookies, candy, etc.) and saturated fat (butter, fried foods, etc.) and eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

Optimum basketball performance requires sound nutritional habits. You can get your daily requirements of nutrients through whole food, so don't rely too heavily on the use of supplements (the addition of a "weight gain" or protein shake supplement can be helpful for those trying to increase bodyweight and have difficulty eating sufficient calories). Please steer clear of all "performance" enhancing supplements; such as Creatine or ephedrine. Let me repeat, we do not endorse nor advocate any performance enhancing supplements. Make sure you know exactly what you put into your body! Don't ever take any pill or powder unless you know specifically what it is.

Most basketball players are tall and slender, and are looking to add muscular bodyweight. In order to gain weight, a player must consume more calories than they expend on a daily basis. This means players looking to put on weight must eat, eat, and eat. Now for the select few looking to lose weight (i.e. reduce body fat), they must do the opposite – consume fewer calories than they expend. This is done by controlling portion sizes.

To determine how many calories per day you should consume, multiply your current bodyweight by 25. This will give you a very rough estimate of your daily caloric needs. For example, a 150 lb. basketball player trying to gain muscular body weight requires around 3750 calories a day ($150 \times 25 = 3750$). Depending on individual metabolism, as well as daily energy expenditure through physical activity, this number may have to be slightly adjusted. Remember, this is just an estimate!

It is very important not to overlook the role nutrition plays in acquiring maximum physical development. What you eat on a daily basis helps determine your body fat levels as well as how much energy you have for intense, rigorous workouts, practices and games. Whether you are trying to gain muscle, reduce body fat, or maintain your current stature - it is very important you follow these basic dietary recommendations:

- ➔ A balanced diet consists of roughly 55-60% carbohydrates, 15-20% fat, and 20-25% protein
- ➔ Eat a variety of healthy foods (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, etc.)
- ➔ Limit your intake of fat, sugar, and sodium
- ➔ Drink plenty of water!
- ➔ Eat 3 standard meals plus 3 snacks (mid morning, post workout, before bed)

Quality Food Choices

Protein: fish, chicken, tuna, lean red meat, turkey, low fat dairy products

Carbohydrates: oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, sweet potatoes, beans, fruits, veggies

Fat: fish, nuts, peanut butter

Sample Daily Menu

Breakfast:

3 eggs + 5 egg whites, raisin bagel with 2 tbsp. of low fat cream cheese

620 calories – 48g protein – 55g carbohydrates – 22g fat

Snack:

16 oz. fat free milk, 1 scoop protein powder, 2 cups of strawberries (blended)

400 calories – 42g protein – 54g carbohydrates – 3g fat

Lunch:

Subway 6 inch Oven Roasted Chicken Breast Sandwich, Subway Broccoli/Cheese soup

510 calories – 29g protein – 63g carbohydrates – 16g fat

Snack: (post workout)

2 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches on whole wheat bread, 12 oz. chocolate milk

800 calories – 35g protein – 65g carbohydrates – 35g fat

Dinner:

6 oz. ground turkey, 4 oz. cooked pasta, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup pasta sauce

625 calories – 58g protein – 92g carbohydrates – 4g fat

Snack:

4 oz. deli style turkey, 2 slices of whole wheat bread, 2 tbsp. of fat-free mayonnaise, banana

385 calories – 26g protein – 63g carbohydrates – 6g fat

Totals: 3,340 calories – 238g protein – 392g carbohydrates – 86g fat

Fluid Goals

It is extremely important to be well hydrated, especially during intense workouts. Your performance on the court can decrease dramatically when your body is low on water. You should aim to drink water all day long; don't wait until you are thirsty.

1. Drink 16 oz. of fluid 2 hours before a workout, practice, or game
2. Drink 8 oz. 15 minutes prior to a workout, practice, or game
3. Drink during the workout, practice, or game
4. Drink 24 oz. per pound of bodyweight lost after the game.

Additional Tips

- ➔ Consume enough calories to add 1lb. of bodyweight per week. If you aren't gaining weight with what you are currently eating... eat more!
- ➔ Try and get most of your calories from real food; don't rely on too many supplements
- ➔ Adopt healthy eating habits to last you a lifetime. Don't bother with a quick fix or a temporary diet. If you are on a diet temporarily, you will lose the results once you stop.
- ➔ Plan your day. Pack snacks and wake up early enough to eat breakfast.
- ➔ Eat a diet rich in complex carbohydrates to provide the energy source to fuel your intense training, practices, and games.

Pre-Game Rules

1. Eat lightly before you play. You don't want a full stomach to weigh you down.
2. Limit eating fatty foods before you play
3. Drink sufficient amounts of water (see above for fluid requirements)
4. Aim to eat 2-4 hours before you play; this gives you body plenty of time to digest. The closer it gets to game time, the smaller the meal.
5. Make sure the meal includes good carbohydrate choices (for energy) but also has adequate protein (to help ward off hunger).

Halftime Rules

1. Replenish fluids with water and/or a small amount of a sports beverage
2. Eat something very small for quick energy; gummy bears are a perfect!

Post-Game Rules

1. Consume carbohydrate rich foods and beverages as soon as possible after you play. This will replenish your muscle's energy stores.
2. Replace fluids that have been lost (see above for fluid requirements).
3. Replace any potassium or sodium that has been lost during competition or training. Fruits, vegetables, and salty foods are excellent for this.

10 Golden Nutrition Rules for Basketball Players

1. Eat something every 2-3 hours, regardless of hunger levels.
2. Get lean protein at every meal.
3. Eat healthy fats every day. Avoid all hydrogenated (Trans) fats and fried foods.
4. Breakfast and pre/post-workout (or game) meals are the 3 most important meals.
5. Eat lean protein before you go to bed each night.
6. Eat vegetables as often as possible.
7. Drink water all the time. Don't drink anything with high fructose corn syrup.
8. Try to eat these foods at least 3 times per week: lean red meat, berries, fish, oranges, eggs, beans, whole oats, spinach, nuts, sweet potatoes, avocados, tomatoes, and broccoli.
9. Use supplements intelligently; not as a crutch or to make up for poor diet. Avoid all performance enhancing supplements; only use for extra protein or calories.
10. Serious players are serious about nutrition. Eat like crap, play like crap!

Post-Workout Calories

Shakes are an easy and quick way to get great calories after a workout!

Recipe for Shake #1:

- ➔ 1 cup of frozen fruit (strawberries and/or blueberries work well)
- ➔ 1 cup of either low fat milk or orange/apple juice
- ➔ 1 cup of low fat yogurt
- ➔ 1 packet of low sugar oatmeal
- ➔ 1 to 2 scoops of protein powder
- ➔ Blend and enjoy!

Recipe for Shake #2:

- ➔ 1 frozen banana
- ➔ 1 cup of low fat milk
- ➔ 1 teaspoon of honey
- ➔ 1 teaspoon of chocolate syrup
- ➔ 1 big scoop of peanut butter
- ➔ 1 to 2 scoops of protein powder
- ➔ Blend and enjoy!

This Nutrition Guide for Basketball Players has been compiled from the information found in numerous articles and presentations by competent, qualified sports nutritionists over the past several years. Please keep in mind, these guidelines are just that, general recommendations. For specific information on what to eat, when to eat it, and regarding your individualized needs, please speak with a Registered Dietician (RD).