

# Feeding **ACTIVE KIDS**

## **The Junior Netballer**

A guide for parents, coaches  
and team managers



[www.1Seven.com.au](http://www.1Seven.com.au)

A joint initiative of the  
Australian Football League  
and Netball Australia

# Contents

**“Encourage your junior netballer to establish a healthy relationship with food from an early age. It is important that she learns to eat and drink well to achieve her best performance and feel great.”**

This booklet offers guidance for meeting the nutritional needs of girls aged five to 11 who play junior netball. Parents and coaches frequently ask me, “What are the best foods and drinks for kids to have while being active, especially at sports carnivals?” Just as often, in conversations between parents at events, I hear quite different opinions being expressed about what is good and bad practice in watering and feeding our sports stars of tomorrow. Obviously, many people are seeking answers to some simple but important questions.

So it was very pleasing when the Canned Food Information Service asked me exactly the same sorts of questions because they wanted to know which of their products were appropriate for these active kids – before, during and after sport, and especially on carnival days.

To answer these questions, we developed this booklet and the accompanying cookbook *Fast Food for Active Families*. I developed most of the recipes for the cookbook and tested them on our three ‘guinea pigs’ and their multitude of friends, who gather around the kitchen bench on the weekends after sport.

This booklet was first written when my own children were aged seven to 12. They are all now in their teenage years, but remain physically very active, so this subject is still dear to my heart. I know how hard it is to juggle the demands of daily living, while trying to maximise the family health and energy levels, so that everyone performs at their best.

As a sports dietitian, I know that elite athletes are well catered for in terms of professional advice on diet and training. But the parents of younger children, particularly in their first few years of competition, often have to rely on the advice of well-meaning volunteer coaches. And sometimes that advice can be misleading or incomplete.

I am really pleased to have the opportunity to provide a service that fills this important gap and complements the work of other sports dietitians working with Australian athletes. The earlier healthy habits are established the better.

I’d like to offer particular thanks to my colleague, sports dietitian Kerry Leech, who is currently the dietitian working with the Queensland and Australian netball teams, for her support and professional review of the original publication, and sports dietitian Lisa Sutherland for her recent review and comments.



**Ruth Logan**

BSc, Grad Dip Nut & Diet (SA), APD.

Ruth is a member of Sports Dietitians Australia and the Dietitians Association of Australia.

## GETTING READY...

*Tips for maintaining everyday fitness and good health*

Optimising growth and development	3
Choose nutrient-dense food rather than energy-dense food	3
Iron	4
Calcium	4
The importance of carbohydrates	4
The importance of protein	4
Where dietary fat fits into a healthy diet	5
The importance of snacks for young netballers	5
Ensuring your child is drinking enough fluids	5
Managing weight and body image issues in your young netballer	6
If your child is overweight, a healthy diet and activity plan can help	6

## GETTING SET...

*Planning the pre-game meals and being ready to enjoy the action*

The night before a day of sport	7
On the day	8

## GO!

*Tips for best performance at training sessions and at the big match*

At the event	9
Fluid intake on the day	10
After the event	10
The night after a big day of netball	11

## HOT TIPS TO STAY COOL

How to avoid overheating and ensure adequate fluid intake	12
---	----

## WARNING SIGNS FOR DEHYDRATION 13

## RECOMMENDATIONS 14

**Author:** Ruth Logan (Sports Dietitian)

**Design:** Paul Vizzari

**Sports Photography:** Sports Photography

First published 2001 by the Canned Food Information Service Inc; revised 2007 by Ruth Logan and Sports Dietitians Australia. © **Ruth Logan 2007**

# Getting READY

Tips for maintaining everyday fitness and good health



**B**efore and during the netball season there are several important things to consider when feeding your active child.

These include:

- Optimising their growth and development throughout the year
- Learning to recognise the nutrient density or 'goodness' of food versus its energy density or kilojoule content
- Including adequate iron and calcium in their daily diet
- Including adequate carbohydrates, protein and 'healthy' fat in their diet
- Providing quick, healthy low-fat meals and snacks to maintain energy levels
- Ensuring sufficient fluid intake
- Being aware of possible weight and body image issues in your child.

## OPTIMISING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

It is important for the junior netballer to eat well every day – not just on competition days or before a carnival.

Active children need constant refuelling and cooling. Their nutrition needs are of great importance to their overall health, growth and development as well as to their sporting performance.

The junior athlete will perform better, for longer, and recover quicker from training and competition when well-nourished. The young netballer who is not getting enough energy may become tired, irritable and lethargic, and may even struggle to maintain interest and enjoyment in physical activity. It is well known that girls tend to drop out of organised sport in their early teenage years, so please nurture and encourage their participation and enjoyment of netball.



The whole family may need to get organised for healthy eating – this can offer a great opportunity to change everyone's food and fluid intake habits. Remember though, that the age and activity level of family members will determine their required quantities.

## CHOOSE NUTRIENT-DENSE FOOD RATHER THAN ENERGY-DENSE FOOD

It is quite surprising how little extra food some of these children require for their sport and, consequently, the quantity of food eaten may not be as large as expected. It is important, however, that they eat top quality foods to ensure optimal nutrient intake. It is sometimes difficult to know how much is enough for active kids – be guided by their appetite and not by how long they have been active.

It may be necessary to encourage children to eat something at times when they feel too tired or busy to bother. But don't panic if their appetite sometimes seems less than usual – that's normal! Healthy snacks are particularly useful at times like this.

Some positions played in netball are quite energy-efficient and don't greatly increase the child's need for fuel from food beyond what's needed for normal growth and development. Netball is a great sport as it offers girls of all shapes and sizes an opportunity to be involved – often the taller girls take the goal positions and the shorter girls play centre, wing attack and wing defence. Iron and calcium are nutrients especially important for young female athletes.

# Getting Ready



## IRON

This mineral is responsible for carrying oxygen around the body and essential for maximising energy levels in active children and adults. Low iron levels can cause tiredness and will affect performance at training and during competition. The best source of dietary iron is lean red meat. The easy way to optimise iron intake is for children to include a small amount of lean red meat in their diet at least three to four times weekly.

Other sources of iron are green leafy vegetables, legumes such as lentils and baked beans, eggs and breakfast cereals. It is more difficult for the body to absorb the iron from these sources, so encourage children to eat complementary foods that supply Vitamin C. Adding Vitamin C increases the body's ability to absorb the iron from non-meat sources. For example, eat strawberries on cereal or drink juice with baked beans on toast.

## CALCIUM

Calcium is the mineral responsible for healthy growth and development of bones. It also helps to keep the muscles working properly. A lack of calcium can lead to weak bones and increased risk of fractures in later life.

Active children should be encouraged to consume at least three to four serves of dairy foods or fortified soy alternatives each day. Examples of one serve include: one cup of fat-reduced milk, one tub of yoghurt, two slices of fat-reduced cheese or one cup of a calcium-enriched soy beverage.

Other good sources of calcium include canned fish with edible bones, green leafy vegetables, nuts and seeds, but kids would need to eat quite large amounts of any of these choices to obtain a sufficient intake.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CARBOHYDRATES

Ensure your young netballer has regular opportunities to eat foods rich in carbohydrates, such as bread and other cereal products, fruit, starchy vegetables and calcium-rich dairy foods or soy alternatives. These Getting Ready Foods listed here need to be eaten at frequent intervals each day as they provide much of the fuel needed to keep kids active and happy.

Carbohydrates keep blood sugar levels constant, aid concentration during the day and help to keep them alert at school. Because the body can only store a limited amount of carbohydrates, it is important to have at least one of these foods at every meal or snack to top up supplies. Remember to encourage healthy dental hygiene habits to minimise the risk of tooth decay.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTEIN

As well as eating and enjoying a wide variety of foods, it is important to make sure that junior netballers have enough protein in their diet to provide the nutrients needed for normal growth. Encourage them to eat the Grow Foods listed on page 5.

It is important that active children learn to eat according to their appetite, ensuring they eat enough but not too much, while remembering they often have great variance in their appetite from day to day due to factors such as activity, tiredness and growth.

## GETTING READY FOODS

### Cereals

Breakfast cereals; rolled oats and other grains served hot or cold; bread and bread rolls; pita, Turkish and mountain breads; tortillas, tacos, lavash; crackers and crisp breads; rice cakes; corn thins; rice; pasta (including canned spaghetti); noodles; couscous

### Dairy and soy foods

Plain and flavoured milks; yoghurt; milk desserts; calcium-enriched soy alternatives

### Fruit

All fresh, canned or dried fruits; fruit bars; fruit fingers; fruit juices

### Vegetables and legumes (pulses)

Potato; sweetcorn; sweet potato; peas; beetroot; pumpkin; baked beans; lentils; chickpeas; soybeans; bean mixes

### Extras – sweet snacks

Low-fat cereal/muesli bars; muffins; biscuits; fruit buns; fruit loaf; fruit scones; pikelets; pancakes; waffles; cake; slice; low-fat brownie; jellied fruits; sports drinks

# Getting Ready

## WHERE DIETARY FAT FITS INTO A HEALTHY DIET

All children require a small amount of fat (3-4 teaspoons) in their daily food intake for normal growth and development. It is recommended that all Australians, including children, limit their intake of saturated fats (mainly animal fats). Children, however, need to include plenty of the healthier unsaturated fats found in foods like fish, nuts such as almonds, seeds and avocado. Children under the age of two generally require full-cream dairy foods to get their nutritional and energy needs. However, children over two are recommended to consume reduced-fat dairy products.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SNACKS FOR YOUNG NETBALLERS

Sometimes a snack might be all a child can manage to eat when feeling tired or too busy or excited for anything else. Encourage 'active' recovery between practice sessions, games and during carnivals by providing foods and drinks containing carbohydrates. Often, fluids are more acceptable to children at this time with the best choices being sports drinks, fruit juice and flavoured milk.



## GROW FOODS

### Meat, fish and eggs

Meat – beef, veal, lamb, pork, turkey, chicken; fish – fresh, canned or frozen; seafood; eggs

### Dairy and soy foods

Milk, cheese and yoghurt; calcium-enriched soy products – milk, yoghurt; tofu

### Legumes, nuts and seeds

Baked beans; meat analogues (vegetarian foods); seed beans; nuts such as almonds, cashews and peanuts; peanut butter; seeds like pumpkin and sunflower

Foods containing a small amount of protein, as well as carbohydrates, are also great – try snack packs of fruit or fruit purees with yoghurt, baked beans or spaghetti with cheese on toast, cereal bars or fruit bars with a milk drink. For more ideas, check the Smart Snacks listed on page 6.

'Treat' foods have a role to play in a healthy diet, but encourage children to recognise treats as an occasional, not everyday part of their diet. Discourage excessive indulgences by explaining to kids that too much of anything can create problems and will certainly affect their ability to perform to their best.

## ENSURING YOUR CHILD IS DRINKING ENOUGH FLUIDS

Managing fluid intake is just as important as managing their food intake. Getting these young people into the habit of taking regular fluids is extremely important. Dehydration is a common problem within this group of junior athletes and is often not recognised. Remind children to keep up their fluid intake by drinking 'mouthfuls often' – during events and immediately after each period of activity, as well as during the day at school or home. Water is the preferred drink, but during extended activity a flavoured sports drink containing carbohydrates and electrolytes may encourage greater intake and keep them performing at their best.

# Getting Ready



**MANAGING WEIGHT AND BODY IMAGE ISSUES IN YOUR YOUNG NETBALLER**

Junior netballers may become concerned about their body weight due to changes related to growth phases. Children grow in spurts – usually going out first, followed by an upward growth phase. During this ‘out’ phase, children often become very aware of their body shape and dislike the associated feeling or appearance of fatness. Coaches and parents need to be aware of their sensitivity to weight-related comments and always encourage healthy food choices without imposing severe restriction on quantity. Deprivation of food intake can lead to nutritional insufficiency, poor growth and long-term problems with disordered eating habits.

There are always going to be some junior netballers who are more prone to overweight problems, while there will also be the naturally smaller participant who struggles to eat enough food and requires constant encouragement with food and

fluid intake to maintain adequate energy for their sport. For those junior netballers wanting to gain weight or strength, the advice is quite simple – eat larger quantities of nutritious foods and healthy snacks like nuts and dried fruit, and enjoy more nourishing drinks to provide the extra energy required to build muscle.

It is important that all junior netballers develop healthy attitudes to food and fluids from an early age in the hope of avoiding the ‘dieting mentality’, which so often becomes associated with female-dominated sports and can predispose them to more serious eating disorders in later years.

Encourage these children to become actively involved with the purchase and preparation of healthy meals and snacks early in life.

If appropriate, use one of their netball idols or a member of the Australian team as a good example of health and fitness. You can tell them that their heroes eat what is recommended here.

**IF YOUR CHILD IS OVERWEIGHT, A HEALTHY DIET AND ACTIVITY PLAN CAN HELP**

Management of overweight children often requires expert help from your doctor or a dietitian. Avoid strict dieting or rapid weight loss. Parents can help by reducing the child’s overall energy intake and encouraging more physical activity.

Choose low-fat foods for meals and snacks, avoid the use of fatty takeaway and convenience foods, and replace high-sugar snacks and drinks with water and more nutritious choices like fruit. Food choices should be similar for overweight and normal weight active children, although the amounts consumed might need to be different. Fatty, salty snacks should be minimised for everyone and replaced by some of the healthy snack suggestions listed throughout this booklet.

## SMART SNACKS

Bread, crumpets or English muffins with jam, honey or vegemite
Sandwich with low-fat cheese, honey or peanut butter
Breakfast cereal with low-fat milk
Low-fat cereal/fruit bars
Fruit bun or raisin toast with jam
Scone, pikelet or pancake with syrup
Low-fat/quick-cook noodles
Canned spaghetti or baked beans
Homemade popcorn
Dried fruit and almonds
Snack pack of fresh fruit or canned fruit
Vegetable pieces with low-fat dip
Low-fat yoghurt
Pita chips, pretzels or crackers
Corn and rice crackers or corn thins
Low-fat smoothie with fruit (fresh or canned)
Low-fat milkshakes
Water
Fruit juice
Creamed rice

# Getting Set

Planning the pre-game meals  
and being ready to enjoy the action



## THE NIGHT BEFORE A DAY OF SPORT

**T**he night before a big sporting event requires extra effort to ensure plenty of carbohydrates are eaten and there has been sufficient fluid intake to guarantee a good state of hydration. Often, this happens on a Friday night when busy families are pushed for time and spare energy.

If so, keep the food simple and use convenient canned and frozen foods, and packaged foods like noodles, pasta and rice to supplement fresh products and produce healthy fitness foods – fast.

Thinking ahead and having foods pre-prepared will ease the pressure and help the family achieve a great performance all round. This is the time for carbohydrates, some protein foods and plenty of nourishing drinks. (Remind children that these are the same foods their netball heroes eat the night before important performances.)

You'll find many family favourites are ideal, including some of the recipes from the cookbook *Fast Food for Active Families*. If you don't have this cookbook you can download a copy from the Sports Dietitians Australia (SDA) website [www.sportsdietitians.com](http://www.sportsdietitians.com).

## FAMILY MAIN MEAL IDEAS

<b>Logan's Lasagne</b>	Rich with beef, pork or chicken, canned crushed tomatoes and soup, frozen spinach, and cottage and mozzarella cheese
<b>Performance Pasta</b>	Your favourite pasta shape with bacon, vegetables and cheese
<b>Mexi Balls</b>	Beef, rice and seasoning from the cupboard turned into yummy meatballs
<b>Sweet Lamb Curry</b>	Luscious lamb and vegetables in a rich but mild curry sauce
<b>Mince in Minutes Tacos</b>	Use our quick mince recipes to turn into tasty tacos
<b>Hunger Buster Burgers</b>	Juicy quick steaks plus the favourite combo of beetroot, pineapple and cheese, plus salad in a roll
<b>Winter Casserole</b>	A classic but quick rich beef casserole enlivened with bacon, tomatoes and mushrooms, which makes use of some handy cans
<b>Chicken Wraps</b>	A quick tortilla filled with roast chicken, canned beans, fresh salad and light sour cream or packaged tzatziki
<b>Tuna Temptations</b>	Your favourite pasta shape plus handy cans of tomato, tomato sauce and tuna
<b>Hearty Minestrone</b>	A meal in a bowl rich with vegetables, beans and rice
<b>Pinwheels</b>	Savoury spiral buns filled with tasty mince, herbs and cheese
<b>Pizza Power</b>	Cleverly uses a prepared base topped with roast chicken, ham, pineapple and cheese
<b>Spinach, Feta and Corn Pie</b>	A delicious 'loaf' to serve with salsa or your choice of sauce
<b>Pineapple Chicken Stirfry</b>	Cubed lamb or beef with pineapple, apple and favourite vegetables in a spicy but sweet sauce



Desserts and 'extras'	Drinks
Apple Crunch Tropical Rice Pudding Apple and Raspberry Muffins Aussie Peach Dream Fruit Salad Anzac Slice Pancakes or waffles* Pumpkin Damper Creamed rice with canned fruit* Canned fruit with custard, yoghurt or ice cream* Fresh rolls, a salad or a fruit platter*	Speedy Shake Fruit Spider Peach and Mango Smoothie Milk drinks* Fruit juices*

\* Recipes not listed  
in the cookbook.

# Getting Set



## ON THE DAY

Select a combination from the following foods to make a nutritious breakfast:

- Wholegrain cereal with low-fat milk and/or yoghurt
- Toast
- Spaghetti or baked beans
- Eggs or low-fat cheese
- Juice or fruit

Breakfast should be eaten at least two hours before activity commences to keep your child feeling satisfied and well-fuelled. But if your child gets hungry again up to one hour before starting exercise, allow a small low-fat snack.

If you have to travel long distances or need to make an early start to get to a carnival, pack some eat-on-the-run foods,

including flavoured milk drinks, cereal bars, bread rolls with spread, juice, fruit bars, canned or fresh fruit, and fruit buns. Or use a prepared liquid meal to allow your child to eat at a more suitable time.

The best foods to serve at breakfast are those your children are used to eating, and are quick and easy to prepare and eat – minimise fuss.

Low-fibre foods, like nourishing drinks, could be best for the 'pre-game' meal if your child gets an upset stomach due to nerves before playing. Otherwise, foods that are rich sources of carbohydrates, yet low in fat, are best eaten prior to activity.

Remember to encourage your child to drink fluids at this time. The best drinks are low-fat milk, juice, sports drinks and plenty of water. One to two cups should be enough.

## BREAKFAST IDEAS

Cereal with fat-reduced milk, fruit and yoghurt, plus a glass of juice

Toast with a scrape of spread, fat-reduced cheese and tomato, with a glass of milk

Spaghetti on toast with a fruit milkshake

Scrambled egg with cheese and tomato, toast and a glass of juice

Banana and peanut butter on toast, with a flavoured milk drink

Baked beans with fat-reduced grated cheese on toast, with fruit and a glass of milk

Canned spaghetti on toast, with yoghurt and a glass of fruit juice

Canned fruit with yoghurt, toast and spread, with a glass of milk

Fruit or English muffins with a scrape of spread and honey or jam, and a fruit smoothie

Pancakes with honey and a glass of milk

Crumpets with honey, a tub of yoghurt, and a glass of flavoured milk or juice

# GO!

Tips for best performance at training sessions and at the big match



## AT THE EVENT

**D**on't rely on the canteen or a nearby shop to supply food and drinks during carnival days, as healthy choices are not always available.

Be prepared by packing your own supplies of food and drinks in a cooler bag. Always pack two drink bottles per child – one for water and the other containing a sports drink. Also take a top-up supply of cooled water, juice poppers and flavoured fluids, if it is going to be a long day.

**“Between games on carnival days, a snack containing carbohydrates will help boost energy levels and prevent hunger.”**

Each of the Energy Boosters listed here provides adequate carbohydrate. It's always a good idea to encourage some food with fluids, if time permits between games.

## ENERGY BOOSTERS

Flavoured milk or a liquid-meal tetrapak (e.g. Sustagen)

Sports drink (600ml)

Snack pack of canned fruit with a juice popper

Sandwich with a juice popper

Piece of fruit or packet of sultanas with sports drink (300ml)

Bread roll with banana and water

Low-fat cereal bar with a juice popper or flavoured milk

Fruit bun with a juice popper

Two large pikelets with jam or honey, plus a snack pack of canned fruit

Fruit muffin (try the easy-fruit muffin packet mixes) with a juice popper or water





## FLUID INTAKE ON THE DAY

In the half-hour prior to starting activity, aim to get your child to drink about half to one cup of water or some of a sports drink. Cool fluids need to be made available to all players at frequent intervals during each game. Different age groups play for different time periods on normal competition days. The 'littlies' (five to seven years) who play Fun Net have a relatively unstructured game for about 30 minutes. Try to ensure at least one drinks break during this time.

Those playing Netta Netball (eight to 10 years) play four 10-minute quarters and the older girls play four 15-minute quarters. In both cases, the advice is the same – ensure your child has at least half a cup of fluid at each break in play. This equates to a couple of 'good mouthfuls'. On some days they might need a bit more depending on their level of exertion and conditions.

On a carnival day, keeping up the fluid intake between games is very important. Some girls could end up on the court for two hours or more during the day.

This is hard work and they need to top up with snacks and fluids between each game to keep performing at their best.

Some children will obviously need more fluids than others, so keep checking how your child is feeling. If they are starting to look or feel hot, increase the fluids a little more.

During the warmer months, children will need to be reminded to drink more frequently as they could get quite hot and experience increased fluid losses. As winter creeps in, their fluid losses will lessen but it is even more important to remind them to drink, as they often won't feel thirsty despite being dehydrated.

Immediately after their game, encourage players to drink the rest of their bottle (at least 500ml). Sports drinks and water are best consumed during and after long sessions of activity, and are especially important during a carnival where children may be active over an extended period of time. As netball is an outdoor sport, encourage kids to seek shade-shelter between games on carnivals to reduce their risk of overheating and sunburn.

Sports drinks have been proven to be useful in recovery after exercise as they assist fluid and electrolyte replacement. Also, it has been shown that children will drink more if the fluid is flavoured – vary the flavours to avoid taste fatigue.

## AFTER THE EVENT

Recovery after each day's game or training session is essential to maintain your child's best performance – especially over consecutive days at a major carnival.

Recovery snacks and fluids should be:

- Started within 30 minutes of finishing exercise
- High in carbohydrate with a little protein
- Quick and easy to prepare and eat
- Available at the venue if it takes a long time to get home

## THE NIGHT AFTER A BIG DAY OF NETBALL

Coping with tired, hungry children at the end of a long day of sport can be challenging for any parent. The temptation to line up at a fast-food outlet can be great, and pressure from the children can make it even harder to resist. Of course, takeaway foods can be enjoyed as an occasional treat, but generally try to limit these to special occasions rather than every weekend!

You may not be in the habit of having a meal ready at home, but with the help of some ideas from the cookbook, and remembering to use 'convenience foods' from the supermarket, it is possible. It also saves the family time and money, and certainly improves the nutritional value of the meal.

One solution is to have food already prepared in the fridge or freezer – only needing reheating while your child is taking a shower.

Have a selection of fresh, canned, packaged and frozen foods on hand to prepare home-cooked 'fast food'. You will find the following quick and easy-to-prepare recipes in *Fast Food for Active Families*, as well as some suitable to prepare in advance for quick reheating when you get home:

### Quickly prepared dishes for the family

- Mince in Minutes
- Tuna Temptation
- Hunger Buster Burgers
- Chicken Wraps
- Pineapple Chicken Stirfry
- Tropical Rice Delight
- Gran's Pineapple Sago

### Ideal for reheating when everyone gets home

- Logan's Lasagne
- Winter Casserole
- Sweet Lamb Curry
- Potato Power
- Hearty Minestrone
- Pinwheels

## WINTER WARMERS

Junior netballers performing on cold, bleak winter mornings will often look for something warm to eat when they finish. Here are some winter-warming, nourishing snack ideas.

<b>Savoury jaffles with a milkshake</b>
A mug or bowl of soup with toast and a glass of milk
<b>Pancakes with fruit and yoghurt and a warmed flavoured milk</b>
Quick pasta snack with juice
<b>Crumpets with low-fat cheese or honey and juice</b>
Low-fat minute noodles with a hot milk drink
<b>Toasted sandwich with juice</b>

- Try these Winter Warmers from *Fast Food for Active Families*:

<b>Hearty Minestrone</b>	Thick with colourful vegetables and nourishing beans, served with crusty bread and a glass of juice
<b>Pinwheels</b>	Delicious spiral buns filled with tasty mince and cheese – enjoy with tomato soup
<b>Mince Muffins</b>	Tasty, beefy mini-muffins that children love as an alternative to a meat pie – perfect with a hot milk drink
<b>Mexi Balls</b>	Delicious, meaty mouthfuls with just the right amount of spices to appeal to kids, who will love these with a banana smoothie



# Hot tips to STAY COOL



## HOW TO AVOID OVERHEATING AND ENSURE ADEQUATE FLUID INTAKE

**R**unning out of fuel is often not the main problem for junior netballers, but getting overheated is a very real possibility for any active kids, and can impair their performance.

- Children should always have their own water bottle on hand or in the team drink crate to sip from during the game and at breaks in play.
- Keep fluids cool (not a problem in winter) and have a mix of water and flavoured drinks, such as a sports drink, to encourage greater intake during and after activity.
- Fluid loss will vary from game to game depending on a child's involvement in the action and the conditions. Be prepared to compensate for extra fluid loss if your child is overheating.

- Remind children not to wait until they are thirsty before they start to drink. By then, they will already be starting to dehydrate and possibly overheat.
- Discourage your junior netballers from using carbonated drinks before, during and immediately after exercise as they can upset the stomach and reduce their desire to drink. (Bloating can be a problem and means they will get too full before they drink a sufficient volume.)
- It is not suitable for active children to have high-caffeine drinks before, during or after sport. Discourage intake of tea, coffee, cola drinks and the new-age energy drinks that contain large amounts of caffeine. These are definitely not recommended for junior athletes.

- Monitor drinks hygiene. Encourage your child to adopt healthy habits when drinking from a shared bottle. It is preferred that kids get into the habit of taking their own bottle, but if they forget, their lips should not touch any part of a shared bottle. Teach them how to squirt or use a chin-sipper bottle to get the water into their mouth.
- Sports drinks are an excellent source of energy and fluid during and after activity. But encourage your netballer to use a straw or drink bottle they can squeeze to direct the fluid to the back of their mouth and avoid swishing round their mouth. It is also wise to encourage kids to rinse their mouth with water after taking any flavoured fluids.

# Warning signs for DEHYDRATION

**K**now the warning signs for dehydration. If a child shows any of the following signs, it would be best to take some time out to rest and take in fluids:

- Dizziness and light-headedness
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea and headaches

After games, you will know if your child has not drunk enough fluids if you see any of these signs:

- Dark urine and infrequent urination
- Dry mouth and throat
- Feeling of extreme heat which remains after the cool-down period



# Recommendations

## RECOMMENDED READING

- *Eat Right for Kids* – Karen Inge
- *Gold Medal Nutrition* – Glenn Cardwell
- *Practical Sports Nutrition* – Louise Burke
- *Sports Medicine Australia Fluid Guidelines*

## RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

- Sports Dietitians Australia [www.sportsdietitians.com](http://www.sportsdietitians.com)
- Nutrition Australia [www.nutritionaustralia.org](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org)
- Australian Institute of Sport [www.ais.org.au/nutrition](http://www.ais.org.au/nutrition)
- Dietitians Association of Australia [www.daa.asn.au](http://www.daa.asn.au)
- Sports Medicine Australia [www.sma.org.au](http://www.sma.org.au)