



## Tecumseh Soccer Club – Healthy Snack Policy

In light of the fact that obesity and nutritional deficiency-related diseases are on the rise in North America, the Tecumseh Soccer Club feel that promotion and modelling of healthy eating habits and balanced lifestyles to members of our Club can play a crucial part in this issue. Whether as Players, Team Officials, Match Officials or as Supporters we all have a part to play. With the support of The OSA Club Excellence program, we are committed to helping improve the well being of our community and in doing so have implemented a **Healthy Snack Policy** since 2011.

Children learn about healthy eating at school, but they need a supportive environment, both at home and in the community to help put those lessons into action. Tecumseh Soccer Club can help make this happen. Community sports also provide adults with an opportunity to become role models for healthy eating. Please take the time to consider appropriate half-time snacks, pre- and post-game meals as well as treats. Tecumseh Soccer Club's Healthy Snack Policy is maintained regardless of:

- ◆ Playing level
- ◆ Location (Home or Away) or
- ◆ Purpose (Match, Training).

A Healthy Snack Policy empowers participants to nourish their bodies appropriately and limit ingredients that will impede performance or wellness.

### *Pre-game Meal*

A pre-game meal should be eaten about 2 to 3 hours before the game, practice or scrimmage. For good, long-lasting energy the meal should consist of mostly whole grains, cereals, pastas, or breads accompanied by a fruit or vegetable and some protein.

### *During the Game*

Soccer is a game where the participants do a considerable amount of running. It is therefore important that snacks during the game work to enhance running. The following is a listing of healthy suggestions:

Fruit: Fruit helps rehydrate the soccer players after they've been running throughout the game. The water also means they get a filling snack without a lot of fat or calories. Whole, fresh fruit that the kids can eat quickly works well; try apples, bananas or grapes. Another option is fruit you can slice ahead of time for easier serving, like watermelon, cantaloupe or oranges cut into wedges. Kabobs made by sliding fruit chunks onto wooden skewers or coffee stirrers also make easy-to-eat fruit snacks for soccer players. Other ideas that incorporate fruit include individual cups of applesauce and frozen fruit pops made with real fruit.



Whole-grain Snacks: Whole-grain snacks satisfy the young players' hunger from playing soccer. Whole grains stick with you longer than processed grains, making them a smart way to refuel. Whole-grain snacks also offer more nutritional value than crunchy snacks like chips. Try muffins, bagels, sandwiches, cereal or crackers made from whole grains. For more variety, combine the whole-grain crackers and cereal with dried fruit, pretzels and similar items to make a trail mix. Granola bars also work well as long as they aren't overloaded with sugar.

Beverages: Beverages play a significant role in recovery from the game. The kids need a drink that will rehydrate the body, especially on hot days. Small bottles of water provide an individual serving option that quenches thirst quickly. For parents who want to bring juice, look for individual containers of 100 percent fruit juice. Skip pop, which contributes sugar and empty calories. Sports drinks are also typically high in calories.

### *After the Game*

Dairy: Dairy products give the soccer players protein for their recovery after the game. Individual cups of yogurt make an easy serving option to incorporate dairy into their diets. Look for yogurt with low sugar content for a healthier option. Combine it with fruit for a more substantial post-game snack. Cheese is another easy option; use individually wrapped string cheese for convenience. Combine the cheese with whole-grain crackers for a complete snack.

Carbohydrates: Within 30 minutes after a game, an athlete should eat a small snack to replenish depleted stores of glycogen, the body's inner fuel; the stores are often burned during the sustained exercise of a 90-minute soccer game. Athletes can find all-natural sources of useful carbohydrates from whole-grain breads, trail mixes or energy bars, providing a moderate source of energy to restore blood sugar levels to normal and repair tired muscles.

Protein: While protein is not the main catalyst of muscle growth, it does aid in the process of muscle repair, making it an integral part of a post-game snack. Approximately 10 to 15 percent of an athlete's calorie intake should come from protein, which could be eaten in a post-game snack in the form of a serving of nuts, peanut butter, low-fat milk, low-fat yogurt or a protein shake.

Mixing the Ingredients: A post-game snack is most effective at repairing muscles when eaten within 30 minutes of a game's conclusion, so soccer players should choose snacks that are pleasing to the palate and easy to digest. A post-game snack of 200 to 300 calories could include a piece of fruit and a slice of whole-grain bread, a cup of yogurt with fresh fruit and granola, or a protein shake mixed with low-fat milk and fresh fruit. A soccer player should drink plenty of water while she eats her post-game snack, and then eat a regular meal within the next one to two hours.