

Nutrition Webinar: Questions and Answers

Following on from the [Nutrition webinar](#) please see attached the answers to questions which were asked:

Very interested to know how much an 11 year girl should be eating at this stage bearing in mind growing needs/puberty etc.

This will completely depend on training load and physical activity at school. Eat to hunger and follow general guidelines about a third – half of your plate should consist of complex carbohydrates (rice, potatoes, pulses, pasta), a third protein (meat, fish, dairy) and the rest vegetables with essential fats for flavour. Snack on carb/protein in between meals. The focus for an athlete this age will be on calcium and iron rich containing foods. Look for signs off:

- Weight loss which indicates insufficient energy.
- Fat gain which indicates an energy surplus or an incorrect balance of macronutrients (usually in the form of carbs).
- Lacking energy which indicates insufficient or badly timed fuelling.

What natural protein supplement can you recommend to help with muscle growth as well as protein rich diet?

None – get it from food at this age and stage. Please refer to the [webinar](#) portion size slides for more detail here but 20-30g of protein at each meal is sufficient for growth.

Please can I have more guidance on the quantities of food groups vs body weight composition

Essentially an athlete should not be hungry at this age, they should be eating regularly. Body composition isn't important at this age, it is about growth and development so focus on whole foods.

Is non dairy Protein i.e. Hemp and Pea as good as dairy whey protein in shakes?

No, it doesn't provide as many Brain Chain Amino Acid's (which are essential for muscle growth and repair), they are absorbed a lot slower and doesn't tend to taste as good. If there is no medical or dietary reason to avoid dairy I would recommend it for protein and calcium content. Choose milk over supplements, if using milk alternatives opt for fortified versions to ensure that the athlete doesn't miss out on key micronutrients.

Pre competition nutrition can often be difficult when competing abroad where the foods an athlete regularly uses may not be available. What key snacks can you recommend for an athlete to pack in their suitcase?

Carbohydrates are usually easy to come by so portable protein options are good to take with you to create a more balanced snack/meal e.g. Beef Jerky, tins of tuna/salmon/mackerel, John West packs and peanut butter. It is important that athletes takes familiar foods which you know you can make

anywhere e.g. porridge pots, cereal, cous cous, rice packs where you just need to add boiling water too. Refer to the 'meal van' ideas slide on the [nutrition webinar](#).

How do you get the right balance of carbs and protein for a vegetarian that eats fish/ Is it possible to get enough nutrients from his food without using supplements/ particular vitamins/minerals or fats that we might under or over supply?

Yes it's possible, see the vegetarian factsheet on the [Additional Information and resources page](#). Essentially you are looking for that magic 20g protein at each meal but from non-meat source, this is much easier to do if they eat fish (vary between white fish, oily fish & seafood). Combine legumes & grains to get a variety of amino acids and meet those protein needs, then just build your plate as any carnivore would to meet energy demands. No need for supplements unless struggling to meet iron needs (only a blood test will tell you this via your GP).

How much calcium should a 17 year old girl when training consume?

See the BDA factsheet on calcium on the [Additional Information and resources page](#).

Answers Supplied by Matthew Thompson (English Institute of Sport Strength and Conditioning Coach for British Canoeing) and Terri Paulson (English Institute of Sport Performance Nutritionist for British Canoeing).

