

## 8 Gameday Nutrition Tips for Young Athletes

Practice makes perfect is a common saying in sports, but did you know that there are other factors that can affect performance? Proper nutrition before and after practice or game day is very important for fueling and recovery of athletes. Here are a few nutrition tips for everyday athletes:

**Focus on carbohydrates for energy:** Choose whole-grain bread, crackers, cereal, pasta and potatoes for lasting energy. Save sports drinks for extra energy during endurance sports lasting more than an hour.

**Spread out protein foods:** Proteins support growth and build and repair hardworking muscles in active bodies. Young athletes should spread protein foods throughout the day, having some at each meal and with most snacks.

**Flow with fluids:** Proper nutrition also includes the fluids you take in during the day. Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water during the day leading up to a game. Continue hydrating during the game and afterward to replace fluid lost through sweating and to prevent dehydration.

**Timing is everything:** When you eat is just as important as what you eat. For a regular meal such as breakfast or lunch, allow your body 2-3 hours to digest the meal before an athletic event. Small snacks such as fruit or a granola bar can be eaten 30 minutes to an hour in advance.

**For more nutrition tips and a sample game day nutrition plan visit:**

<https://www.eatright.org/fitness/sports-and-performance/tips-for-athletes/gameday-nutrition-tips-for-young-athletes>

### Cauliflower

This versatile veggie will help you stay healthy – and happy – this winter season. It is a great source of vitamin C – important for your body’s immune system – and fiber, which promotes stable energy levels and good digestion. The most common type of cauliflower is white, but it can also be found in purple, orange & green. Enjoy this nutritious veggie on its own or in any number of easy and creative recipes, like the one below.

### Buffalo Cauliflower Bites

- 1 medium head cauliflower (about 2 lbs), cut into large florets (about 8 cups)
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1/3 cup hot sauce, your choice

1. Preheat oven to 475°F. Place cauliflower on a rimmed baking sheet.
2. Drizzle with 3 tablespoon of oil. Sprinkle garlic powder, salt, & pepper, and mix well.
3. Roast until golden-brown & beginning to crisp, about 15 minutes. Meanwhile, whisk hot sauce & remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a small bowl.
4. Remove cauliflower from oven. Pour hot sauce mixture over them and toss until evenly coated. Return to oven and roast until crispy, 5 to 10 minutes more.
5. Enjoy!