

FOOD AND CULTURE IN TEAM SPORTS

CANADIAN SPORT CENTRE MANITOBA SPORT PERFORMANCE NUTRITION TEAM

FOOD, TEAMS AND CULTURAL SAFETY

Food is often sought for performance enhancement from its nutrient components. However, the power of food and its contribution to team building is often overlooked. Food is valued by all and is influenced by individual's culture. Providing a safe space for athletes to share their food practices can enhance team relationships and ultimately team performance.



FOOD VALUES

Cultural, emotional and social elements of food are just as important as the physical component of food. Pressuring athletes to eat a certain way is unwarranted and adds additional pressure to an already high stress environment. If you believe a teammate is struggling with their eating habits, seek out professional help from a dietitian or health care provider.



SOCIAL IMPACT OF FOOD

Food brings people together and provides a sense of community and family. Food has similar affects in team bonding. Sharing meals can strengthen relationships between athletes. Building deeper friendships outside of training has a positive impact on both the individual athlete and the team as a whole.

HEALTHY EATING



There is no "one size fits all" to healthy eating. Many factors influence how an individual perceives healthy eating. Some factors include nutritional needs, religious beliefs, dietary restrictions, food preferences and more. Athletes have the power to listen to their bodies and individualize their meals to optimize performance.

PROMOTING FOOD AND CULTURE IN SPORT

1

Focus on food balance and avoid labelling "healthy" vs "unhealthy" foods. All foods fit in an athlete's diet and play a vital role in preparation and motivation for competition.

2

Take the time to be curious and appreciate what your teammates eats. This action makes teammates feel welcomed and provides a safe team environment. Plus, you may discover a new and improved competition meal!

3

Avoid words such as "gross", "yuck" and "disgusting" when referring to foods. These foods may be staple items in a teammate's diet and negative remarks can make them feel uncomfortable and attacked.