

THE PERFORMANCE DIET

1. Eat lots of complex carbohydrates.
2. Eat moderate amounts of protein.
3. Eat very little fat.
4. Eat very little sugar.
5. Eat foods from all four of the food groups.
6. Eat 5 small meals a day instead of 3 big ones.

Pretty simple, huh? Nothing to weigh. Nothing to count. Nothing embarrassing to eat when no one is looking. It's just plain common sense once you understand how proteins, fats, carbohydrates and sugar work inside your body. The most radical thing is eating five small meals instead of three big ones. We call this "grazing."

Grazing is good for you because it gives you more energy. When you eat three big meals a day, your body has to work hard to digest all that food. It uses energy you could be using for thinking, reading, concentrating — in short, performing. Then, in between meals it runs out of energy and needs more.

When you eat five small meals this doesn't happen. Your body can digest the small meals more easily, so it doesn't "steal" your performance energy to use in digestion. And by feeding it more frequently, you're giving your body a constant supply of energy so it's always there when you need it. Assuming, of course, that you eat the right foods.

Eat between classes?

Melissa Schaeffer, 16: "I bring a bran muffin and an apple with me to school. I usually eat one between second and third periods and one between third and fourth. Then when I get home I sometimes eat another muffin and a yogurt, or some fruit and toast."

Bruce Williams, 16: "I always get real hungry during third period and I don't have lunch until fifth, so I bring a sandwich from home and eat it on the way to my fourth period class."

Mike Cameron, 17: "I have to go to work right after school, so I don't really have time to sit down and eat. So I pack a couple of sandwiches and I eat them on my way to work."