

PiXL Endurance



What did you have for breakfast?



What are you planning to eat for lunch?



We are always told that 'eating well' is important – but why?

Nutrition, quite literally, powers us to perform.

We may feel that we are working our hardest to achieve our goals, but if we are not fuelling our bodies in the best way then we aren't going to perform at our best.



‘Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.’

Hippocrates



Nutrition: Power to Perform

We must fuel our bodies in the best way we can to:

- energise our bodies and minds
- improve our alertness and ability to respond to whatever is thrown at us
- sustain us through revision, examinations and everything else life brings our way
- perform to the very best level we can.



Nutrition: Power to Perform

It may seem a simple and small tweak to make, but if we make the wrong decisions about our nutrition, we may:

- feel sluggish and lack energy
- have lower levels of concentration
- respond less effectively to situations that arise
- burn out
- our energy levels may crash.



Nutrition: Power to Perform

Preparation

Energy levels

Re-hydrate

Focus fuels

Omega 3s

Re-think brain blockers

Macro-nutrients



Nutrition: Power to Perform – Preparation

As part of your preparation for the day, you need to begin with a nutritious breakfast.

Your brain needs energy to perform efficiently.

Try to eat foods with slow-release carbohydrates, such as porridge, whole grain bread or muesli. Add proteins into the mix to help keep you fuller for longer, for example milk, yoghurt or eggs if you have time!

If you aren't a 'breakfast person' experiment with smoothie recipes that use oats and protein-rich ingredients which may be easier to stomach!

Nutrition: Power to Perform – Energy levels

It is important to eat regularly throughout the day and avoid foods that are high in sugar such as pastries, sweets and fizzy drinks. Although they may taste delicious, they bring energy highs and crashes.

Aim to keep your blood sugar and energy levels stable by eating a combination of whole grain carbohydrates, proteins and healthy fats such as sandwiches, jacket potatoes, pasta etc.



Nutrition: Power to Perform – Re-hydrate

Dehydration can cause our brains to shut down and therefore not work as efficiently. It can also cause headaches.

We should aim to drink at least 2 litres of water everyday to help us think faster, remain focused and ensure our brains have enough energy to function.

A great way to start your day is drinking water with fresh lemon in. Carry a bottle around so that you can re-hydrate throughout the day.



Nutrition: Power to Perform – Focus fuels

Snacks are a great way to fuel our bodies continuously throughout the day with brain boosting foods.

Some delicious snacks that can help power our brains are:

- fresh and dried fruit
- nuts
- seeds
- peanut butter and rice cakes
- non-sugary popcorn
- 0% fat yoghurt
- avocado
- a small amount of dark chocolate.



Nutrition: Power to Perform – Omega 3s

Research has shown that Omega 3 helps our brains to function and can increase our levels of concentration. It also helps to improve our immune system when our bodies and minds are stressed.

The best source of Omega 3 is oily fish such as mackerel, salmon, sardines and trout. Other sources are:

- walnuts
- chia seeds (great for adding into baked cakes!)
- spinach
- eggs
- cod liver oil tablets.



Nutrition: Power to Perform – Re-think brain blockers

When you have tests or examinations, try to avoid:

- foods made with white flour which require extra time and energy to digest
- foods that are high in refined sugar that will lead to energy highs and crashes
- sugary and fizzy energy drinks and limit caffeine as these can increase nervousness
- turkey because it contains L-tryptophan, an amino acid that makes you feel sleepy
- heavy carbohydrate meals that can make you feel sluggish
- foods that you haven't tried before.



Nutrition: Power to Perform – Macro-nutrients

On exam days, try to make sure that your diet has a combination of protein, fat and carbohydrates at every meal.

You need foods containing protein to provide amino acids that create dopamine and norepinephrine chemicals which help increase how alert, attentive and energetic you are.

You need fats to help keep you full for longer and to help stabilise your blood sugar levels.

You also need complex carbohydrates to turn into glucose to fuel your brain, as well as to create serotonin to help you remain calm and help foster a positive mindset.



Improving your nutrition

You'll find further information on pages 14 and 15 of your Prepare to Perform Student booklet as well as a plan sheet on page 16.

Some delicious and highly nutritious smoothie recipes and advice for creating your own recipes are also available on pages 17 and 18.



Improving your nutrition

To help you improve your diet even more and optimise your ability to perform to the best of your ability, make use of the recipe booklet.

There are 20 meal recipes and 6 snack recipes specifically designed by chef Mark Lloyd to help you feel fuller for longer and to perform well.

These are also available in card form and there are videos showing step by step instructions.



CHILLI CON CARNE WITH JEWELLED RICE



CHICKPEA AND VEGETABLE CURRY



A DIFFERENT FISH FINGER SANDWICH



MEXICAN CHICKEN ENCHILADAS



PEANUT CHICKEN AND NOODLES



FLORENTINE PIZZA



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