

## How to use this pack

Local sporting clubs play a big role in the health and wellbeing of communities. By working together, we can encourage players to develop positive habits from a young age. To do this, you can take some simple actions.

- Remind players and parents to focus on fuelling adequately before the session, bringing the correct snacks and drinks for the game, and making sure they recover properly after.
- Hang the posters throughout the clubhouse or dressing room.
- Coaches are key to these healthy behaviours becoming embedded in players' existing routines, just like bringing gumshields and boots to training.
- Share the 'healthy eating for sports' social media graphics through local platforms.

## What's included

- Parents' Guide
  - 4 Posters
  - Digital Graphics
- The posters are customisable on GAA Tobar where you can download and add your club crest.
- Share with parents as a reminder of what their child needs before, during and after physical activity.

This resource is aimed at 8-11 year olds, however, the advice is suitable for all players regardless of age.



## GAA healthy club testimonials:

“ We contacted our local fruit supplier and got them to sponsor fruit once per month. They allowed us to purchase fruit for the other weeks at cost price.

We provided this at underage “fundamentals” training every Friday and then for the club summer camp we provided fruit cups for everyone.”

“Fruity Tuesdays” are one of our most successful initiatives. Tuesday is the main training evening and fruit is available to the children on that evening. Very positive feedback from players and parents. Parents have reported that children who have not eaten fruit at home are eating it at training.”

For more information, visit

[safefood.net](https://safefood.net)



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# Healthy eating for sport

Coaches Guide



with



### Before exercise

- Remind players to eat 2-3 hours before partaking in physical activity.
- Eating 2-3 hours before will give players energy so they can get the most out of their training sessions and matches.
- **Foods to eat:**
  - Ham/tuna/turkey/egg sandwich;
  - Pasta salad with tuna or chicken;
  - Wrap with fillings like cheese, hummus and vegetables.

- **Top tip:** Some children might find it hard to eat meals before or after training. They might prefer snacks or liquid foods. E.g. A pot of yoghurt and fruit, a smoothie.
- **Coach activity:** Share the digital graphic with parents the day before matches or training.



### Their kit bag

- Remind players to pack a snack and a drink for training and matches.
- Extra snacks can help players perform and feel better.
- Energy boosters:
  - Fresh fruit;
  - Nuts and seeds;
  - Oat cakes;
  - Cereal bar;
  - Water or milk.

- **Top tip:** Energy drinks are not suitable for children and have no nutritional benefit.
- **Coach activity:** Share the digital graphic with parents before matches or training.

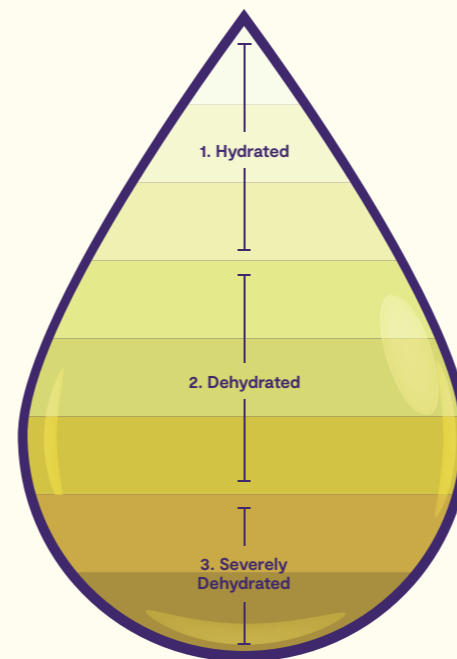


### Recover and recharge

- Encourage players to eat something as soon as possible after a match or training.
- Eating something after physical activity will help players recover, maintain muscle mass and get them ready for the next session.
- **Foods to eat:**
  - Tuna or turkey sandwich;
  - Yoghurt drink;
  - Bagel and cream cheese;
  - Milk or yoghurt with a banana.
- **Top tip:** Milk, a banana or a yoghurt drink are a great way for players to refuel on the journey home before they can eat a bigger meal.
- **Coach activity:** Share the digital graphic with parents after matches or training.

### Hydration

- Remind players to drink plenty of water and before they feel thirsty – thirst is a sign that their body has needed fluids for a while.
- Using the pee chart is an effective way for children to understand their hydration needs. They can reference the pee chart to see if they need to drink more water.
- **Top tip:** Water and milk are the best options for hydration.
- **Coach activity:** Hang the 'hydration' poster close to your club toilets.



## Healthy club ideas

### Create a coach/parent rota to bring healthy snacks:

- Fruit skewers;
- Fruit salad cups;
- Veggie sticks;
- Whole fruit;
- Milk or smoothies;
- For more healthy snack ideas: [safefood.net/healthy-eating](https://www.safefood.net/healthy-eating).

### Choose one day a week to provide fruit after training:

- "Fruity Tuesdays" to create routine and excitement.

### Create a 'healthy game of the week':

- It might be as simple as naming cones after fruit and vegetables to highlight the importance of healthy eating for sports performance.

### Be a role model

- Drink water and eat healthy foods in front of players.

### Give healthy rewards

- Try to avoid using treat foods as rewards. Instead, use praise and encouragement, games, stickers or cards.