SOUND NUTRITION
IS ESSENTIAL FOR CHAMPIONSHIP SUCCESS

By James Johnson, RCN, CSN, CMA

In a world of dietary fads and ever-changing nutritional supplements, we often get confused about which approach is safe and sound. Start with the basics. ***Nutrition relates to the calories, proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals, trace elements and water that make up the foodstuffs an individual eats.*** Every individual is different. And effective, sound health requires that each one of us consume the *appropriate* amount of the nutrients mentioned above, and that we get those nutrients from the best sources. Athletes, especially, should consume their daily requirements from food sources such as grains, fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy and beans. Caloric requirements vary for different individuals, but are usually determined by one's size, age, training, and health issues. To determine your general caloric requirements, a good place to start is the US Department of Agriculture health Pyramid. This Pyramid offers practical answers to questions about how much of certain foods one should consume each day.

The Pyramid is only a start, however. I strongly recommend that athletes involved in competitive sports training for at least 10 to 25 hours per week should go above and beyond the USDA Food Pyramid Guidelines. Especially, remember that fruits and vegetable are rich in the essential vitamins and minerals that our bodies require during periods of training, competition, and recovery. Moreover, available scientific research widely agrees that eating fruits and vegetables will aid and/or assist our immune system, helping to prevent disease—always a concern when preparing for competition.

Every individual requires the right balance of vitamins and minerals necessary for healthy living, training, and competing. Still, in a fast-food world not all of the foods we eat will contain the nutrients necessary for a well-balanced diet, and many athletes will therefore try to correct for that nutritional deficit by taking supplements. Supplements can help, indeed, but all competitive athletes should be careful to research the nutritional products they buy to ensure that the product does not contain substances listed as a prohibited substance by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). Often, such questions can be hard to answer.

That's why many athletes can benefit from a sports nutritionist advice. In particular, I encourage any athlete, regards of age, to consult with a nutritionist before embarking upon changes in his or her dietary or training routine. You wouldn't attempt to complete in competition without taking the necessary steps under the guidance of your coaches. Similarly, any athletes training for competition should get advice about how to achieve safely and with optimal results the nutritional benefits required to achieve their competitive goals.

As a Registered/Certified Clinical and Sports Nutritionist, my daily practice keeps me aware of the many nutritional products, dietary practices, and foodstuff choices confronting athletes today.

If you are seeking the best, safest way to maximize nutrition to meet health and sports objectives, contact us at 1-888-877-2322 (toll free) or email info@jjchamp3x.com or visit our website at www.jjchamp3x.com.