

Building a Professional Athlete

by Neal Spruce, Founder & CEO

Parents hear all the time about the importance of good nutrition, but this is a critical message for those with developing athletes at home. Not only does what and when young athletes eat impact how they perform during a game, it also significantly impacts their ability to develop into mature, and potentially professional, athletes.

Being a youth football coach for the last nine years (and a baseball coach for seven years) has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life as most of my players (many I had since age six) have gone on to excel at high school sports and academics.

It wasn't just the satisfaction of helping boys to become productive young men, which was special enough, but the experience also made me a better adult. I probably learned as much from them as they did from me. One of things I am most proud of is how these boys took my nutrition advice to the next level by telling their parents how they needed to eat because "Coach Neal said so". There are few tasks more difficult to accomplish as a parent than to get your own kids to "eat right". Now add the complexity of designing and delivering the proper diet for your child athlete and you have – well – an impossible task. The vast majority of parents aren't able to tell their young athletes what they should eat or drink in order to excel on the field or to maximize their growth and training potential. But what I learned during my coaching tenure was that if you, as the child's athletic mentor, give the young player a tangible reason to eat properly and they experience the positive outcome on the field, they will do it. And they'll get their parents to feed them accordingly. Now that's a switch!

How you eat determines how you play now and later

Proper types, amounts and timing of meals are especially critical throughout puberty when nutrition can make its greatest contribution to a young athlete's future adult overall physical stature. Improper nutrition throughout these years can prevent the child from developing to their full potential in all areas. Furthermore, a child's (or adult's) daily energy level potential is entirely determined by how and when they fuel their body in relation to their sport activities. Anything less than eating within the basic guidelines for a specified activity, including meal composition and timing, simply leads to a lower energy potential when compared to proper eating. And this can be the difference between a strong or not-so-strong start and finish of the game/workout. When your energy systems are full, you always feel your best, think better, react quicker, last longer and recover faster. Proper nutrition gives the player the physical potential to maximize his or her skills.

Proper nutrition can

- Maximize performance during events, including optimizing mental focus by properly loading and reloading energy and fluids
- Enhance each training outcome because properly timed feedings of the right nutrients will build more muscle & strength than "random eating". In other words, your body will spend more time and energy building muscle rather than simply repairing the exercise damaged tissues – every workout should make you better, bigger, faster or stronger
- Contribute to an extended competitive lifespan: by maintaining proper nutrition the body receives a steady flow of the "right stuff", which means less wear and tear and thus a natural slowing of the athletic aging process
- Control weight because diet is solely responsible for achieving ideal playing weight

Pre- and post-event feedings make the difference

You build more muscle and strength when incorporating pre- & post-feedings

Virtually all studies show that "immediate" pre- & post-training carbohydrate and protein feedings stimulate muscle growth and reduce muscle damage to a far greater extent than normal feeding patterns. And this is even when overall daily calories, carbohydrates and protein intake are equal. Also, it was recently discovered that this growth activity (size contribution) that takes place inside this "60-minute post-training window" cannot be compensated for at some other point in the day. This means this unique muscle growth period is activated by the feedings.

During these windows, muscle cell nutrient uptake is at its highest point of the day. We must deliver a perfect, fast-acting formula before the "window" closes if we want to maximize exercise-induced strength, performance and/or size gains.

In summary, if you feed your muscles before and immediately after training (and the sooner the better) with a rapidly absorbed formula (not traditional foods), you build more muscle than if you don't engage in the practice. This is true no matter how well you eat the rest of the day.

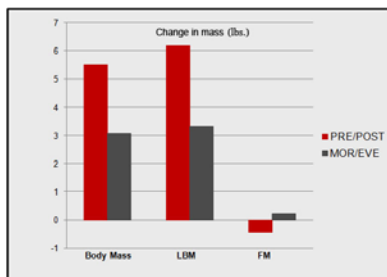
Designer foods – beyond functional

As mentioned above, due to the two to three hours required to extract and then absorb the needed nutrients, no traditional foods meet the rapid absorption criteria necessary to "hit the immediate post-training growth window". This is why we have designer formulas. And although nutrition bars with the proper carbohydrate, protein and fat ratios can be effectively used as before and after feedings, liquid is generally better for the simple reason of speed to the muscles. We have only recently discovered that although the post-training metabolic window may be open for up to 60-90 minutes, it's at its greatest point immediately after you cease your workout or activity. From that point on, the longer you wait to feed the muscles, the less muscle building/recovery activity takes place, and it continues to decrease as the 60-90 minute time-frame finally expires.

Figure 1: Training results from 23 experienced, recreational bodybuilders' resistance training for 10 weeks with all things equal (diet, supplements, training, etc.) except the addition of pre/post feedings yielded significantly greater gains in body mass, LBM, strength and reduction in fat mass for the pre/post feeding subjects. (1)

The perfect formula

Until now, no one has taken the time or made the effort to develop the perfect youth formula. And although FirstString™ can be used by any athlete, we formulated it to truly target the needs of college and growing youth athletes. This ideal formula contains a mix of protein (P), carbohydrates (CHO) and fats (F) that meets the



NCAA guidelines for college athletes. It also satisfies the established criteria of a pre- and post-exercise or activity meal needed to maximize the training response, leading to greater gains in strength, size, performance and competition outcomes.

One serving of FirstString contains 42 grams of the best quality proteins, and 86 grams of a CHO packed into 570 calories, making FirstString the perfect muscle gain formula. FirstString can deliver exactly what's needed to ensure the surplus calories are incorporated into muscle tissues rather than body fat when appropriate resistance exercise is included and total daily calories are appropriate.

This safe and effective formula has the following unique features:

- Contains Aminogen®, which has been shown to increase the body's uptake of amino acids and protein, making greater amounts available to the working muscles and decreasing incidences of bloating or gas common with competitive products
- NO aspartame, relatively LOW sodium, LOW sugar
- Contains specialized fast- and slow-acting proteins
- Not "spiked": when consuming dotFIT products as directed with one's normal daily food intake, the athlete is assured of keeping the body at a safe and optimal nutrient level
- Formulated and manufactured for great taste and pleasing texture in an FDA-registered facility in compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs), undergoing regular, rigorous product testing
- Typical use
- As a pre- and post-workout supplement, each training day (dose ranges based on size)
- 10-40 minutes pre-workout
- Users under 200 LBS consume ½ serving; over 200LBS consume 1 serving
- Immediately following training repeat the same dose
- As a meal replacement or weight gain supplement use as needed throughout the day to meet individual calorie and nutrient goals

What are they doing now?

By the way, about those kids I coached from age six to high school, most stayed together and went on to play high school football. In their freshman year they went undefeated en route to winning the championship – never missing a meal.

References

Cribb PJ, Hayes A. Effects of supplement timing and resistance exercise on skeletal muscle hypertrophy. Med Sci Sports Exerc. 2006 Nov;38(11):1918-25.

FUN FACT

Neal's son, Nelson was a 2015 All PAC-12 1st team selection in football from the University of Colorado. Spruce holds the record for most career receptions in PAC-12 history (as of 3/10/16) and set 42 Colorado Buffalos football records.

The Connecticut Speed School supplies dotFIT products and specifically, FirstString. Contact us for more information at info@ctspeedschool.com or 203-298-4277.



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"If it didn't work
I wouldn't use it...
PERIOD."
--Shaq