During the school year, students can spend long days in the classroom followed by sports practices and competitions. Despite young athletes’ high-energy needs, many skip breakfast and may go extended periods of time without a meal or snack due to a busy schedule. Consuming regular meals and snacks is essential to meeting a young athlete’s energy needs. Eating meals throughout the day will keep muscles working at their best and improve concentration in the classroom and on the field.

- Lunch is a good time for young athletes to fuel up for after-school activities. Focusing on whole grains, lean protein, fruits and vegetables will provide long-lasting energy for the muscles to use later in the day.
- After-school snacks provide a boost of energy to delay fatigue and keep muscles working hard during an entire practice or game. These snacks should include carbohydrates, such as whole pieces of fruit, dried fruit, or cereal. Other great snack options include granola bars, trail mix, and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

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