

## Cutting Weight: Safe Approaches to Stay Strong

### What about cutting weight?

Sometimes a teen athlete or a coach feels that weight loss would help with performance. Sometimes a certain weight is needed to compete.

Cutting weight can be tricky for teen-agers because you are still growing and maturing. The best time to make weight changes is in the off-season for your sport.

Over-concern with weight may affect self-esteem or occasionally lead to disordered eating behaviors.

Remember that it is more important to feel well, perform well and stay strong than to look a certain way or reach a certain weight.



### Healthy Eating Approaches:

- Eat breakfast daily
- Do not skip meals
- Move away from sugary, high calorie beverages such as sodas, energy drinks and fruit juice
- Eat less fried food
- Eat mindfully – eat slowly, enjoy meals and snacks, focus on hunger and fullness cues
- Focus on fruits and vegetables
- Go light on gravies, sauces and extras such as shredded cheese and dressing
- Whenever possible, let a regularly scheduled meal serve as pre-game or recovery nutrition
- If you aren't sure that you are taking a healthy approach, check in with a Registered Dietitian

## Simple Swaps to Cut Calories:

Instead Of...	Try...
Whole or 2% milk	Fat-free (skim) milk
Granola	Cheerios or Wheat Chex
Premium ice cream	Regular ice cream or frozen yogurt
Pepperoni pizza	Cheese or veggie pizza
Big Mac	Regular cheeseburger
Large fries	Small fries
Meatball sub	Turkey sub
Fried chicken breast	Grilled or roasted chicken breast

## Signs that You Might be Losing Too Much Weight:

- Irritability or other changes from usual personality
- Rapid weight loss
- Decreased energy level in practice and daily activities
- Not wanting to participate in team pizza nights or other food related activities
- Lack of expected growth
- Increase in stress fractures and illnesses

## Making Weight for Competition (Start about 2 days before weigh in)

- Taper training
- Eat lower fiber foods (white bread, Rice Krispies or Corn Flakes, canned fruits, cooked veggies, white rice or pasta)
- No added salt, limit salty foods like chips and cured meats

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