



UNIFIED
FITNESS CLUBS



Special Olympics
Indiana

Lessons for Life

These nutrition, fitness, and wellness lessons help athletes develop knowledge about their physical health and build overall health literacy. Lessons are flexible and can be adapted to meet the unique needs of your club. Unified Partners play an important role in these sessions—you can have each team present a lesson, or multiple teams can collaborate on a presentation. Lessons are highly customizable, so adjust them in whatever way works best for your club and athletes to encourage engagement, leadership, and teamwork.

Table of Contents

 Sun Safety	3	 Personal Hygiene	29
 Fruits & Veggies	7	 Sleep	37
 Hydration	11	 Walking Safety	41
 Tobacco Avoidance	15	 Bike Safety	46
 Bone Health	20	 Food Choices	51
 Strong Minds	25		

Sun Safety





Fun in the Sun

Objective: Athletes will understand the importance of sun safety, learn strategies to protect their skin, and recognize the risks of overexposure to the sun.

Materials Needed:

Sunscreen bottles (variety of brands/SPF)

Hats, sunglasses, or protective clothing (optional)

Introduction:

Practicing sun safety helps prevent sunburn, reduce the risk of skin cancer, and avoid heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion or heat stroke. While sunlight is important for vitamin D production, too much sun can be harmful.

Discussion: *Has anyone spent time outside in the sun recently? How did it feel?*

Protect Your Skin:

- Wear a hat, sunglasses, and protective clothing.
- Use broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 30.
- Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours or after swimming, sweating, or drying off.
- Exercise in the shade, especially during the middle of the day when the sun is strongest.

Discussion: *How do you protect your skin from sunburn? How can our club stay safe in the sun?*

Additional Tips:

- Check that sunscreen has not expired.
- Use waterproof or water-resistant sunscreen.
- Sunburn can occur even on cloudy days.
- Avoid tanning beds.
- Listen to your body—if you feel too hot, get out of the sun and cool down.



Activities

1. Feel the Sun

If it is sunny, have athletes stand in the sun and describe how it feels.

- Is it hot? Warm? Hard to see?
- Does it feel good or too hot?
- Ask about their favorite weather.

2. Sunscreen Investigation

Give each pair or team a bottle of sunscreen and have them locate below and discuss findings:

- Expiration date
- Waterproof or water-resistant label
- SPF number



Knowledge check:

1. Wear a (**hat**), sunglasses, or protective clothing.
2. Use sunscreen that is at least SPF (**30**).
3. Reapply sunscreen at least every (**2**) hours, or after swimming, sweating, or toweling off.
4. Exercise in the shade, especially in the (**middle**) of the day when the sun is strongest.

Key Takeaways:

1. Too much sun exposure can damage your skin.
2. Use broad-spectrum sunscreen SPF 30 or higher.
3. Combining multiple sun safety methods provides the best protection.

Fruit & Vegetables





Fruit and Veggie Power

Objective: Athletes will learn the importance of fruits and vegetables, understand recommended daily amounts, and practice strategies to include more in their diet.

Materials Needed:

Paper and markers, pencils, or crayons

Optional: Paper plates, magazines, or printed images of fruits and vegetables

Introduction:

Fruits and vegetables provide important vitamins, minerals, fiber, and water that help our bodies grow, heal, stay hydrated, and have energy for physical activity.

Discussion: *What is your favorite fruit/vegetable?*

Benefits of Fruits and Vegetables:

- Taste great and make a perfect snack.
- Provide fuel for exercise and help us stay active.
- Contain water to help us stay hydrated.
- Contain fiber to help us feel full longer.

Tips to Eat More Fruits and Vegetables:

- Make half of every plate fruits and vegetables.
- Include fruits for breakfast, e.g., berries in oatmeal or smoothies.
- Add vegetables like carrots, cucumbers, or peppers to salads.
- Add lettuce, tomato slices, or other veggies to sandwiches.
- Pack cut-up fruits and vegetables for snacks on the go.

Discussion: *How can you eat more fruits and vegetables each day?*



Activities

1. Goal Setting

- Help athletes set a weekly goal for fruit and vegetable intake.
- Use S.M.A.R.T. goals:
 - S – Specific: Clearly define the goal
 - M – Measurable: Track progress
 - A – Achievable: Make it realistic
 - R – Relevant: Important to the athlete’s health
 - T – Time-bound: Set a timeline

Examples of S.M.A.R.T. goals:

- Eat one serving of fruit with breakfast on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
- Try one new fruit and one new vegetable by Sunday and write down what was tried.

	Fruit	Vegetables
Girls	½-2 cups	2½-3 cups
Boys	2-2½ cups	2 ½-4 cups

2. Build Your Healthy Plate

Instructions:

1. Give each athlete (or Unified Partner team) a piece of paper (or plate).
2. Draw a large circle to represent a plate.
3. Draw a line down the middle to divide the plate into two halves.
4. Fill one half with fruits and vegetables, using variety in color and type.
5. Share your plate with the group and discuss your choices.

Optional Extension:

- Use food magazines to cut out images of fruits and vegetables and glue them onto the plate.
- Draw or glue directly onto paper plates for a hands-on experience.



Knowledge check:

1. Fruits and vegetables give us **(vitamins)** and **(minerals)** that help us grow and heal.
 2. Fruits and vegetables also give us **(fiber)** and **(water)** that keep us full and hydrated.
 3. I can add fruits and vegetables to my day by:
-

Key Takeaways:

1. Vegetables give your body vitamins, minerals, and energy.
2. The USDA recommends making half of every plate fruit and vegetables.
3. Packing fruits and vegetables is a great way to eat healthy during physical activity.

Hydration





Hydrate to Feel Great

Objective: Athletes will understand the importance of water for the body, recognize signs of dehydration, and learn strategies to stay hydrated before, during, and after exercise.

Materials Needed:

Water bottles (athlete's own or provided)

Optional: Paper and markers for brainstorming or water logs

Introduction:

Water is essential for our bodies to work properly. We lose water when we sweat and even when we breathe. Not drinking enough water is called dehydration, which can make us feel tired or sick. Drinking water before, during, and after exercise helps prevent dehydration.

Discussion: *How do you feel when you don't drink enough water?*

Signs of Dehydration:

- Feeling thirsty
- Feeling tired or sluggish
- Dry mouth
- Headaches
- Dark yellow or brown urine

Discussion: *How can we drink more water during exercise?*

Tips for Staying Hydrated:

- Try to drink 5–10 oz of water every 20 minutes during activity.
- Keep a reusable water bottle handy.
- Encourage teammates and friends to drink water too.
- Sip water throughout exercise instead of drinking a lot at once to prevent stomach aches.
- Eat water-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, soups, and smoothies.

Discussion: *What is one thing you will do differently after today's lesson to drink more water?*



Activities

1. Show & Tell: Water Bottles

- Have athletes show their water bottles to the group.
- Compare sizes, shapes, colors, stickers, and types.
- Discuss what each person does to stay hydrated.

2. Think-Pair-Share: Ways to Drink More Water

- Pair up with a unified partner and brainstorm ways to incorporate more water into daily routines.
- share ideas with the group.

Ideas to get started:

- Drink water with meals.
- Eat foods high in water content (fruits, vegetables, soups, smoothies).
- Keep a water log to track daily intake.
- Sip water throughout the day instead of drinking a lot at once.



Knowledge check:

1. Not drinking enough water can cause (dehydration).
 2. Dehydration can make me feel:
-
3. I should drink water before, during, and (after) exercise or playing sports.

Key Takeaways:

1. Dehydration happens when we do not drink enough water.
2. Drink water throughout the day, especially during exercise and sports.
3. Water is the best choice for hydration.

Tobacco Avoidance





Breathe Easier, Play Better

Objective: Athletes will learn the health risks of tobacco use and secondhand smoke, understand the benefits of avoiding tobacco, and practice strategies for staying tobacco-free.

Materials Needed:

Pictures of tobacco products (attached)

Optional: Paper and markers for brainstorming

Introduction:

Tobacco use affects your health and performance. Nicotine, found in tobacco, is highly addictive, and secondhand smoke can also harm your lungs and overall well-being. People who avoid tobacco have more oxygen in their bodies, which helps them walk, run, and play better.

Discussion: *Have you ever experienced secondhand smoke? Where were you, and how did it make you feel?*

Health risks of tobacco products include:

- Heart and lung disease
- Tooth loss and decay
- Cancer
- Weaker bones

Benefits of avoiding tobacco:

- Better oxygen for improved physical performance
- Saving money (in Indiana, a pack of cigarettes costs around \$10)
- Reduced exposure to secondhand smoke

Tips for Avoiding Tobacco:

- Keep your home and car smoke-free.
- Visit smoke-free parks and public places.
- Leave a room if someone is smoking and say:
"I am an athlete, and fresh air helps me perform my best."
- Talk to a doctor if you use tobacco and want to quit.
- Support friends and family as they try to quit smoking.

Discussion: *What are some ways you can avoid smoking or secondhand smoke?*



Activities

1. Think–Pair–Share

- Form small groups or unified partner teams to discuss ways to avoid tobacco and secondhand smoke.
- Each team shares their ideas with the group.

2. Practice Saying No

- Have pairs or small groups role play situations where someone offers a tobacco product.
- Practice confident, healthy responses:

Response ideas:

“I am an athlete, and not smoking helps me perform better.”

“I don’t want to spend my money on tobacco products.”

“It’s important for me to stay healthy, so I don’t smoke.”

“No, thanks.”

“I’m trying to avoid secondhand smoke for my lungs. Could you smoke that later?”

3. Tobacco Product Awareness

- Show athletes pictures of different tobacco products. Many may be surprised that vapes, ZYNs, and chewing tobacco are all considered tobacco products.
- Discuss that all tobacco products:
 - Are addictive.
 - Harm the lungs.
 - Should be avoided to protect health and sport performance.



Vape Pens



ZYN



Cigarettes

© Talk to FRANK



Cigars

Hookah



Smokeless Tobacco (chew)



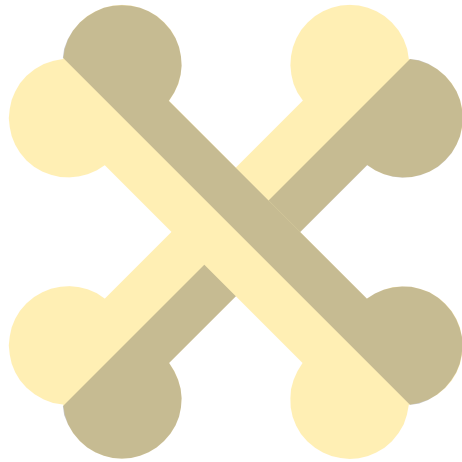
Knowledge check:

1. Tobacco use can harm my (**lungs**), heart, teeth, and bones.
2. Secondhand smoke can also affect my (**sport**) performance.
3. Ways to avoid tobacco include staying in smoke-free places, saying (**no**), and supporting others.

Key Takeaways:

1. Avoiding tobacco helps you breathe easier, play better, and stay healthy.
2. Tobacco is addictive and harmful, even in small amounts or secondhand exposure.
3. Practicing ways to say no and choosing smoke-free environments protects your health and athletic performance.

Bone Health





Strong Bones, Strong Body

Objective: Athletes will learn the importance of bone health, identify key nutrients and activities that support strong bones, and understand lifestyle choices that contribute to lifelong bone strength.

Materials Needed:

Optional: Food samples or pictures of calcium- and vitamin D-rich foods

Optional: Space for movement activities (jumping, squats, walking, stairs)

Introduction:

Bone health is essential for movement, physical activity, and overall health. Strong bones help us stay active and participate safely in sports and daily activities. Calcium builds and maintains strong bones. The femur, or upper leg bone, is the largest bone in the body.

Discussion: *Can anyone name another bone in their body?*

Sources of Calcium and Vitamin D:

- Cow's milk and fortified milk alternatives
- Dark leafy greens
- Cheese and yogurt
- Beans and legumes
- Fortified orange juice

Discussion: *What are some foods you like that are high in calcium or vitamin D?*

Physical Activity for Strong Bones:

Being active is one of the best ways to strengthen bones. Activities that make your bones work against gravity help them grow stronger. Examples include:

- Jumping or hop-scotch movements
- Running, jogging, or walking
- Climbing stairs
- Strength training (squats, push-ups, lifting weights)

Discussion: *What are some exercises you enjoy that help strengthen your bones?*

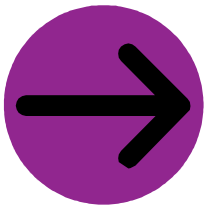


Other Things That Support Bone Health:

Bone health involves more than calcium and vitamin D. Other helpful habits include:

- Eating enough protein (supports bones and muscles)
- Consuming nutrients like magnesium, vitamin K, and potassium
- Avoiding smoking
- Limiting alcohol
- Maintaining a healthy body weight
- Getting enough sleep
- Even small daily habits can build stronger bones over time

Discussion Question: *What is one thing you will add to your routine or diet to help strengthen your bones?*



Activities

1. **Bone-Strengthening Exercise Break:** These types of activities send signals to their bones to grow stronger, making them an important part of everyday fitness. Have athletes try a few of the following:

- Jumping or hopping
- Running or jogging
- Walking laps
- Climbing stairs
- Bodyweight strength exercises (squats, push-ups, etc.)
- Dancing

2. **Make a Skeleton Drawing Activity:** Have athletes work in small groups.

1. Give each group a large sheet of paper.
2. Have one partner trace a body part of the other (arm, leg, hand, foot, etc.).
3. Inside the outline, athletes draw what they think the bones look like.
4. Groups share their drawings with the whole team.
5. Optional: show pictures of real X-rays at the end to compare guesses with actual bone shapes.
6. This activity helps athletes visualize the shape and size of their bones.

3. **Calcium & Vitamin D Label Hunt**

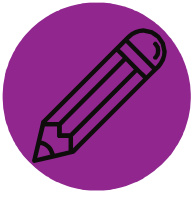
Bring empty containers of:

- Milk and milk alternatives
- Fortified juices
- Yogurt containers
- Cereal boxes

Instructions:

1. Have small groups or unified pairs look at the Nutrition Facts label.
2. Ask them to find the amount of calcium, vitamin D, and any other vitamins or minerals listed.
3. Each group shares what they found and compares nutrient amounts across different foods and drinks.

This activity helps athletes learn to read labels and understand which foods support strong bones.



Knowledge check:

1. Calcium helps our bones stay (**strong**).
 2. Some foods with calcium are:
-
3. Activities like (**jumping**), running, and weight bearing exercises are especially important for strengthening bones.

Key Takeaways:

1. Strong bones help you move safely and stay active.
2. Calcium, vitamin D, and physical activity are essential for bone health.
3. Your skin makes some Vitamin D from sunlight, but food and supplements are usually needed too.



Strong Minds





Train Your Brain

Objective: Athletes will learn what it means to have a strong mind, understand how mental training improves focus and learning, and practice strategies to support mental strength.

Materials Needed:

Paper and pencils for drawing

Introduction:

Having a strong mind means being able to focus, handle challenges, learn new skills, and stay calm even when things get hard. Just like exercising the body makes muscles stronger, exercising the brain helps athletes stay sharp, confident, and ready to learn. The brain can grow and change by trying new activities, this ability is called plasticity.

Discussion: *How do you keep your mind sharp?*

Brain Exercises You Can Practice Anywhere

Learn Something New	Try a new instrument, start a new hobby, learn a new dance, practice a new language, etc.
Use Your Non-Dominant Hand (or Foot!)	Try writing, brushing your teeth, or even dribbling a ball with your other hand to challenge your brain.
Meditate	Meditation can help you calm your mind and improve focus.
Do a Puzzle or Read a Book	Crosswords, word searches, sudoku, or any type of reading can strengthen your thinking skills.
Be Creative	Draw, paint, sketch, garden, or create any type of art to engage your brain in new ways.
Connect with Others	Talk with a friend or family member. Try calling or video chatting with someone you care about.
Teach Someone Something	Teach a skill you're good at—or show a friend how to play your favorite sport. Teaching strengthens your own understanding.
Listen to Music	Music can boost mood, memory, and creativity.
Try a New Exercise	New movements challenge your brain and body at the same time.

Discussion: *What is one new thing you can do this week to help strengthen your mind?*



Activities

1. Draw Your Town

- Give each athlete or unified pair a piece of paper.
- Ask them to draw a map of a meaningful place—such as their room, house, neighborhood, or town.
- After 3-10 minutes, everyone shares their maps with the group.
This activity builds creativity, memory, and spatial thinking.

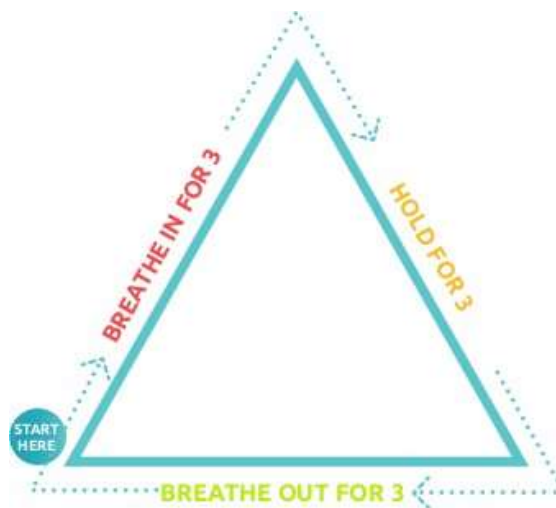
2. Practice Deep Breathing

Deep breathing can help athletes calm down when they feel nervous, stressed, or overwhelmed, and it prepares the mind for focus before activities.

Try it together:

1. Set a timer for 1 minute.
2. Breathe in slowly through the nose.
3. Exhale gently as if blowing out a candle.
4. Continue until the timer ends.

This exercise supports relaxation and mental strength.





Knowledge check:

1. I can workout my (**brain**) to make it as strong as it can be!
2. Painting, (**coloring**), sketching, or creating any type of art can strengthen my mind!
3. Having a strong mind can help me with my (**memory**) and focus.

Key Takeaways:

1. Paying attention to how our bodies feel helps us notice stress early and manage it more effectively.
2. Training our brain is something we can do every day.
3. Using breathing exercises during practice, school, or daily life can improve performance, confidence, and emotional wellbeing.



Personal
Hygiene

Personal Hygiene





Staying Clean, Staying Healthy

Objective:

Athletes will learn the importance of personal hygiene, understand how good hygiene prevents illness, and practice proper handwashing and tooth-brushing techniques.

Materials Needed:

Handwashing visual

Tooth-brushing and flossing visuals

Optional: Large open space for movement games

Introduction

Good personal hygiene helps keep our bodies clean, healthy, and free from germs that can make us sick. Hygiene includes anything we do to wash away dirt and germs, take care of our skin, teeth, and hair, and prevent disease. When we practice good hygiene, we feel better, stay healthier, and can perform our best at school, work, and sports.

Discussion: *How do you practice food hygiene at home, at school, or during sports?*

Key Components of Good Hygiene

- Washing your hands
- Bathing or showering regularly
- Trimming your nails
- Brushing and flossing your teeth
- Shampooing your hair
- Wearing deodorant every day

Why Handwashing Matters

We touch many surfaces every day, and germs can spread quickly from our hands to our faces, food, and other people. Handwashing is one of the easiest and most effective ways to prevent illness.

Wash your hands:

- After using the toilet
- Before preparing, touching, or eating food
- After playing with animals
- After physical activity or sports practice
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose



How to Wash Your Hands Properly: Reference the handwashing visual

1. Turn on the faucet and wet your hands with clean water.
2. Apply soap.
3. Scrub your hands, between fingers, and under nails for 20 seconds.
 - Tip: Sing “Happy Birthday” twice or the alphabet song once.
4. Rinse well
5. Dry your hands with a clean towel or paper towel.
6. Turn off the water using a paper towel if available.

Brushing Your Teeth: Use the brushing visual

Step 1: Prepare

- Add fluoride toothpaste to a soft-bristled toothbrush.
- Electric toothbrushes can help athletes with limited dexterity.

Step 2: Brush

1. Brush top teeth—outside, inside, and chewing surfaces—using gentle back-and-forth or circular strokes.
2. Brush bottom teeth using the same method.
3. Brush your tongue to remove bacteria and freshen breath.
4. Brush for 2 minutes, twice a day.

Step 3: Replace Your Toothbrush

- Replace every 3–4 months, or sooner if the bristles are frayed.

Flossing Your Teeth: Use the flossing visual

Step 1: Prepare

- Take a piece of floss and wrap it around the middle finger of each hand.

Step 2: Floss

1. Hold the floss between your thumbs and index fingers.
2. Slide the floss gently between the teeth.
3. Curve it into a C-shape around each tooth.
4. Move the floss up and down along the side of the tooth.
5. Repeat for every tooth.
6. Floss once a day.

Tips for Limited Dexterity

Hand-held flossers or floss picks can make flossing easier.

Discussion: *How will you practice good hygiene this week?*



Activities

1. Yes, No, Maybe Game

A fun movement-based activity to help athletes practice when to wash their hands.

Setup: Mark one side of the space as **Yes**, the opposite side as **No**, and the middle as **Maybe**.

Instructions:

1. Tell athletes you will read different scenarios.
2. They answer the question: **“Should I wash my hands?”**
3. Athletes run to Yes, No, or Maybe.
4. After each round, discuss why handwashing is or isn’t needed in the scenario.

Should I wash my hands?	Scenarios:
	After going to the bathroom
	Before eating a sandwich
	After petting a dog
	Before writing a letter
	After blowing your nose
	Before playing basketball
	After drinking from a water bottle
	After watching a TV show
	Before calling a loved one
Before reading a book	

2. Act It Out: Handwashing Steps

This activity teaches the six steps of good handwashing through movement.

Instructions:

1. Divide athletes into small groups or unified pairs.
2. Have each group act out the six steps of handwashing.
3. Encourage creativity - exaggerated movements help everyone learn.

Discussion: *Why is each step important? When should we wash our hands during the day?*



6 EASY STEPS TO CLEAN HANDS



1
WET YOUR HANDS



2
APPLY SOAP



3
WASH YOUR HANDS FOR 20 SECONDS

Don't forget to scrub between your fingers, under your nails, and the top of your hands.



4
RINSE WELL



5
DRY YOUR HANDS



6
TURN OFF WATER WITH PAPER TOWEL



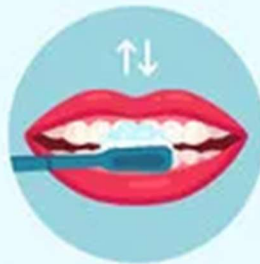
HOW TO BRUSH YOUR TEETH



Use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste



Brush the outer surfaces in a circular motion



Brush the outer surfaces in an up-and-down motion



Scrub the inner surfaces using up-and-down strokes



Brush the chewing surfaces of all teeth



Brush the tongue using up-and-down strokes



Spit out the toothpaste and rinse out your mouth



Good job!



HOW TO USE DENTAL FLOSS

STEP 1
Measure about 18–24 inches of dental floss

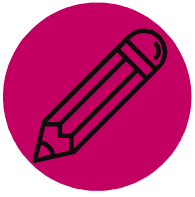
STEP 2
Wrap the floss around one of your middle fingers

STEP 3
Hold each end of the floss between your thumb and index finger

STEP 4
Slide the floss between your teeth

STEP 5
Gently wipe back and forth in a “C” motion

STEP 6
Remember to floss all sides of your teeth



Knowledge check:

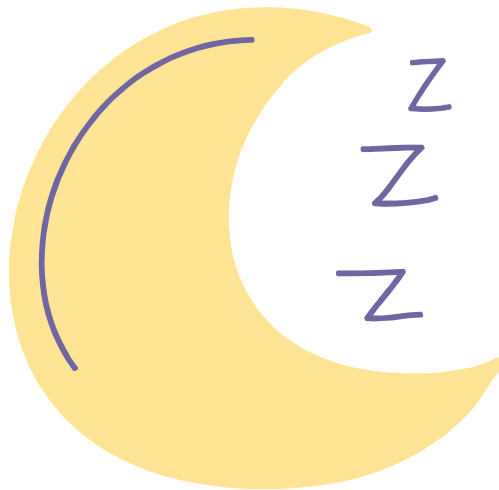
1. You should wash your hands for **(20)** seconds.
2. You should brush your teeth for **(2)** minutes **(twice)** a day.
3. You should floss your teeth **(once)** a day.

Key Takeaways:

1. Good personal hygiene helps keep our bodies clean and prevents germs from making us sick.
2. Handwashing is one of the easiest and most important ways to stay healthy.
3. Brushing and flossing every day keeps teeth and gums strong.
4. Wash your hands after handling shared sports equipment.



Sleep





Recharge your Body

Objective: Athletes will learn why sleep is essential for physical and mental health and explore strategies to improve sleep habits and nighttime routines.

Materials Needed:

Optional: Yoga mats, guided yoga video

Introduction:

Sleep is a vital part of staying healthy. When we sleep, our bodies and minds rest so we can feel our best the next day. Getting enough sleep supports our immune system, reduces stress, improves memory, and may help with healthy weight management. Adults typically need 7-9 hours of sleep each night, while youth need 8-10 hours.

Discussion: *How many hours do you usually sleep per night?*

Healthy Sleep Habits

Falling asleep or staying asleep can sometimes be difficult. These strategies can help create a more restful night:

- Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.
- Create a calming bedtime routine such as yoga, stretching, or breathing exercises.
- Avoid screens in bed, including TVs, laptops, and phones.
- Create a relaxing sleep environment.
- Limit caffeine and avoid vigorous exercise close to bedtime.

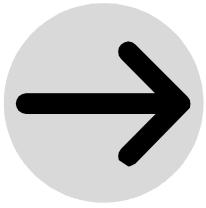
Discussion: *What helps you fall asleep or feel relaxed at night?*

Why Sleep Matters

Getting enough sleep every night helps:

- Keep your heart healthy
- Prevent illness
- Support recovery after workouts
- Reduce risk of injury
- Strengthen memory
- Improve mood and emotional health

If sleep continues to be difficult, it may be helpful to talk with a doctor for additional support.



Activities

1. Breathing Exercise Practice

Have athletes place one hand on their stomach. Together, breathe in for 3 seconds, hold for 1 second, and breathe out for 3 seconds. This simple exercise can calm the body before bed or during stressful moments.

2. Group Bedtime Yoga Session

Yoga helps the body relax without high intensity. Lead a short routine or use a free beginner-friendly YouTube video. Chair yoga is a great option for athletes who prefer low-impact movement.

3. Think–Pair–Share: Sleep Helpers

Athletes reflect on what helps them fall asleep—a quiet room, a favorite item, a sound machine, or a nighttime routine. Partners share with each other, then volunteers can share with the group.



Knowledge check:

1. A calming bedtime (**routine**) can help your body know it is time to rest?
2. Avoiding (**screens**) before bed can help you fall asleep faster.
3. Sleep can reduce stress, improve memory, and may help with (**weight**) management.

Key Takeaways:

1. Sleep is a vital part of overall health and helps the body and mind recharge.
2. Good sleep supports recovery, prevents illness, and improves mood and focus.
3. A consistent, calming bedtime routine can make falling asleep and staying asleep easier.

Walking Safety





Strong Bodies, Safe Paths

Objective: Athletes will learn strategies to stay safe while walking or running, understand the importance of visibility and planning, and practice safe walking habits.

Materials Needed:

Optional: “Walkability Survey” handouts, pencils, reflective vests or clothing

Introduction:

Being a safe walker or runner is very important. Wherever you go (paved trails, neighborhood sidewalks, or parks) there are safety tips that help keep you protected.

Discussion: *Where do you usually run or walk?*

There are many places people like to walk or run: paved trails, neighborhood sidewalks, or local parks. No matter where you go, there are safety tips to follow.

Safety Tips:

Check In	Let a friend, family member, or caregiver know where you are going and when you plan to return.
Carry a Phone or ID	Bring a phone or ID so you can call for help or be found in an emergency.
Know Your Route	Plan your route before you leave. It’s easy to get lost, especially if it’s a new path.
Road Walking	Always choose a sidewalk or designated path. If there’s no sidewalk, walk against traffic (on the left side of the road) so you can see cars coming.
Crossing Streets	Cross at traffic lights and crosswalks. Never cross in the middle of the street, even if it looks clear.
Headphones	Avoid using devices that block your hearing, stay aware of traffic, people, and your surroundings.
Be Visible	Wear bright colors or reflective clothing, especially in low light.
Be Seen	Make sure drivers see you before crossing, make eye contact or give a wave to ensure they notice you.

Discussion: *How do you run or walk safely? What is one way you will change how you walk or run after this lesson?*



Activities

1. Take a Club Safety Walk

- Show athletes which side of the road to walk on when there is no sidewalk.
- Point out safe areas in your community for walking or running.
- Teach what to wear to be visible, and how to make sure drivers see you.

2. Think-Pair-Share

- Have athletes and unified partners think about the last time they went on a walk or run.
- Questions to consider: *How did you stay safe? What could you have done differently?*
- Share answers with a partner or small group, then discuss as a whole club.

3. Walkability Survey

- Take a walk around your community with your club while filling out the “Walkability Survey” on the next page.
- Note what areas are safe and what could be improved.
- Brainstorm ideas with your club on ways to make your community more walking friendly.



Walkability Survey

Section 1: Safety & Path Quality

1. Were there sidewalks or safe places to walk?
 Yes No Sometimes
2. Did you feel safe while walking here?
 Yes No Not Sure
3. Were the sidewalks or paths easy to walk on?
 Smooth Some Cracks Hard to walk on
4. Did the cars drive safely near you?
 Yes No Sometimes

Section 2: Street Crossings

5. Was it easy to cross the streets?
 Easy Hard Not safe
6. Were there crosswalks or traffic lights where you needed them?
 Yes No Not enough
7. Did drivers stop for you at crosswalks?
 Yes No Sometimes

Section 3: Visibility & Environment

8. Could drivers see you clearly while you were walking?
 Yes No Not Sure
9. Was the area clean and comfortable?
 Yes No Kind of

Section 4: Overall Experience

10. Did you enjoy your walk?
 Yes No A little
 11. Would you walk here again?
 Yes No Maybe
 12. What is one thing that would make this area safer to walk?
-



Knowledge check:

1. Wear bright or (**reflective**) clothing so drivers can see you.
2. When walking, always cross the street at traffic lights and (**crosswalks**).
3. If there is no sidewalk, walk (**against**) traffic so you can see cars coming.

Key Takeaways:

1. Wear bright or reflective clothing to be visible to drivers.
2. Let someone know you're walking or running plans before you leave.
3. Always use sidewalks and crosswalks to stay safe.
4. Walk against traffic if no sidewalk is available, so you can see cars coming.
5. Stay aware of your surroundings, avoid headphones or anything that blocks your hearing.



Bike Safety





Safety on Two Wheels

Objective: Athletes will learn how to ride safely, understand the importance of protective gear, and practice safe biking habits.

Materials Needed:

Helmets

Cones, chairs, or tape for obstacle path

Optional: Reflective vests, bike lights

Introduction:

Biking is a great way to get outside, exercise, and strengthen your legs, heart, and lungs. Safety is essential when biking outdoors or on stationary bikes.

Discussion: *Where do you like to ride your bike? What makes a place feel safe to ride?*

Safety Guidelines

1. Helmet Safety (Most Important!)

- Helmet should sit level on your head, not tilted back.
- Front of helmet: 1–2 fingers above eyebrows.
- Side straps: Form a “V” under each ear.
- Chin strap: Tighten so only 1–2 fingers fit underneath.
- Replace cracked, dented, or previously crashed helmets.
- Helmets should fit snugly—not too loose or tight.

2. Visibility & Gear

- Wear bright or reflective clothing, especially at dawn or dusk.
- Add reflectors or stickers to bike frame, wheels, and/or helmet.
- Make sure your bike has: front white light, rear red light, working reflectors.

3. Choosing Safe Places to Ride

- Bike paths, parks, and streets with marked bike lanes are safest.
- Avoid busy roads, poorly lit areas, and streets without shoulders or bike lanes.

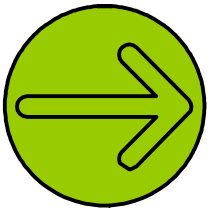
4. Communication & Awareness

- Let others know when passing by saying “On your left!” or using a bike bell.
- Use hand signals for turns and stops.
- Look left-right-left before crossing streets.
- Keep hands near brakes to stop quickly.
- Avoid headphones—stay alert to traffic and surroundings.
- Always ride with traffic, never against it.



5. Bike Check (ABC Quick Check)

- **A – Air:** Tires firm, no cracks or bulges.
- **B – Brakes:** Squeeze brakes—they should stop wheels firmly; cables not loose.
- **C – Chain:** Chain clean, moves smoothly, no rust or tight spots.
- **Quick:** Spin wheels to check they don't wobble; ensure seat and handlebars are tight.



Activities

1. Helmet Fit Practice

Have athletes bring their helmets to the session and teach them how to:

- Place the helmet level on their head.
- Adjust the straps into the “V” under the ears.
- Buckle, then tighten the chin strap.
- Check for correct finger spacing.

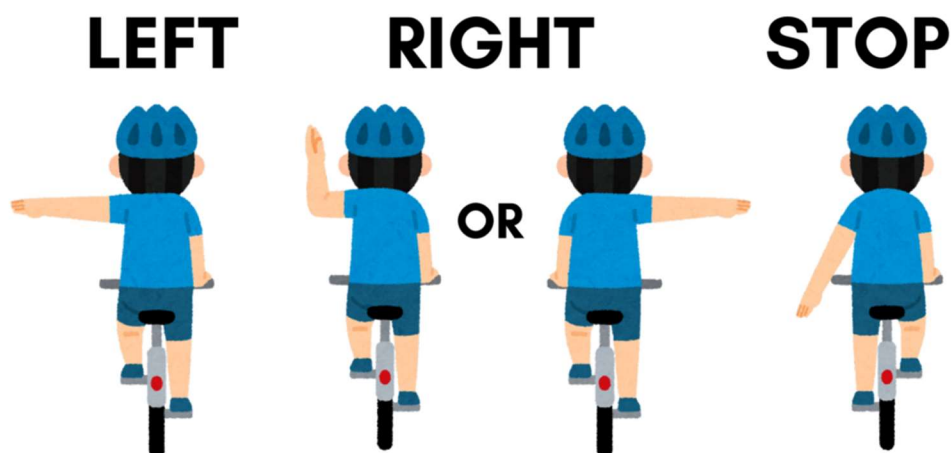
Have athletes in pairs or groups checking each other’s helmet.

2. Bike Signaling

- Have athletes stand in a line.
- Call out directions randomly:
 - “Left turn!” → athletes hold left arm straight out
 - “Right turn!” → athletes hold right arm straight out or left arm up
 - “Stop!” → athletes bend left arm down
- Repeat several times, making it a fast-paced game for engagement.

3. Obstacle Path

- Use cones, chairs, or tape to create a simple “bike path” on the floor.
- Have athletes walk along the path, practicing the correct hand signals as you call out turns or stops.
- Encourage them to signal ahead of time, just like they would on a real bike.



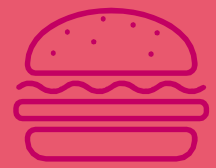


Knowledge check:

1. Helmets protect your (**brain**) and should always be worn.
2. Before riding, check your bike with the (**ABC**) Quick Check.
3. Let others know when you are passing by saying “(**on your left**)!” or using your bike bell.

Key Takeaways:

1. Wear bright or reflective clothing so others can see you.
2. Choose safe paths, trails, and bike lanes.
3. Communicate when passing and watch your surroundings.
4. Perform an ABC Quick Check before every ride.



Food
Choices

Healthy Food Choices





Food That Powers You

Objective: Athletes will learn how to make healthy food choices at home, in restaurants, and on the go, understand the difference between every day and sometimes foods, and practice reading labels and planning meals.

Materials Needed:

Restaurant menus (fast food or casual dining)

Food labels brought in by athletes or leaders

Paper and pens for brainstorming

Introduction

Eating healthy can feel tricky, whether at home, at restaurants, or grocery shopping. This lesson teaches athletes how to make smart choices every day to fuel their bodies for health and performance.

Discussion: *Where do you usually eat? Do you go grocery shopping?*

Healthy Choices at Restaurants

- Choose smaller portions instead of supersized meals.
- Pick whole grains like brown rice, whole wheat bread, or wraps.
- Go for lean proteins such as chicken, fish, or beans.
- Choose healthy sides like salads, fruit, or vegetables.
- Ask for condiments and dressings on the side.
- Drink water instead of sugary drinks.
- Choose grilled, baked, steamed, or roasted foods instead of fried.
- Customize when possible: swap fries for a salad or add extra veggies.

Discussion: *What healthy choice can you choose at your favorite fast-food restaurant?*

Healthy Choices at the Grocery Store

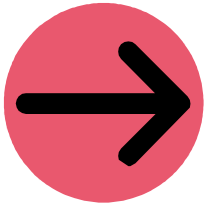
- Read nutrition labels to find foods low in sugar and saturated fat, and high in fiber.
- Check serving sizes and compare them to how much you actually eat.
- Look at ingredient lists: fewer, recognizable ingredients usually mean healthier.
- Plan ahead: make a grocery list focused on fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains.
- Fruits and vegetables are always healthy choices, even without a label.



Balancing Every day and Sometimes Foods

- Everyday foods: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins.
- Sometimes foods: chips, cookies, ice cream.
- Eat a variety of foods to get different nutrients.
- Practice mindful eating: eat slowly and notice hunger/fullness cues.

Discussion: *How will you change how you grocery shop or eat out after this lesson?*



Activities

1. Choosing a Healthy Meal from Menus

- Divide athletes into unified pairs or small groups.
- Ask each group to choose a healthy meal from the menu.
- Remind them to pick healthy sides and smaller portions.
- Share meals with the whole group and discuss ways to make meals healthier.

2. Reading and Evaluating Food Labels

1. Divide athletes into unified pairs or small groups.
2. Look for saturated fat, added sugar, fiber, total fat, Vitamins, and minerals (like vitamin A, calcium, iron)
3. Decide whether the food is a healthy choice or a “sometimes” food.
4. Share your findings with the group.

3. Healthy Eating on the Go

Athletes often travel to sporting events. Brainstorm, as a group, ways to eat healthy while on the road. Some tips:

- Pack healthy snacks instead of stopping at fast food.
- Review restaurant menus ahead of time and choose healthy options.
- Choose baked, grilled, or broiled food instead of fried.
- Side swaps: apple slices instead of fries, baked chips instead of cookies.
- Ask for dressings on the side.
- Choose water instead of soda or sugary drinks.



Knowledge check:

1. Choosing (**fruit**) instead of fries and (**water**) instead of soda can make your meal healthier.
2. Reading (**food labels**) helps you make smarter choices about sugar, fat, fiber, and vitamins and minerals.
3. Which foods are “everyday” foods, and which are “sometimes” foods for you?

Key Takeaways:

1. You can eat well at home, at restaurants, or on the road.
2. Smaller portions and healthy sides make meals healthier.
3. Lean proteins, whole grains, and fruits/vegetables are your friends.
4. Reading labels helps you choose wisely: Pay attention to sugar, saturated fat, fiber, and vitamins/minerals.
5. Choosing water, apples, or baked foods instead of soda, fries, or fried foods can make a big difference over time.