Nutrition of American Gold Competition Gymnasts

Emma Schalow, DEP Student, Sallie Yakowicz, DPD Student, Sara Supplee, DEP Student, Connie Schmit, University Studies,
Ardis Brun, PhD, RD
North Dakota State University

Abstract

Objective
To determine the top nutritional concerns for performance athletes, and to use those concerns to educate these athletes about better nutrition choices of snacks eaten before and during practices.

Theory, Prior Research, Rationale
Research lead us to believe that the greatest problem for female performance athletes is the female athlete triad, including choosing low nutrient density foods due to lack of knowledge, A diet low in protein, complex carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, as well as high in sugar hinders the performance in young women athletes.

Target Audience
Young female performance athletes, specifically American Gold club gymnasts.

Description
15 club gymnasts were surveyed about nutrition related questions before and after our intervention. We presented their data results and provided education using PowerPoint and an informational flyer on healthier snack alternatives, including protein bars as an example of a great snack during practice.

Evaluation
The number of gymnasts who correctly answered all healthier snack questions increased from 7 out of 15 (47%) to 12 out of 15 (80%).

Conclusions and Implications
The main nutrition problem among this population is not selecting healthy snacks fit for female performance athletes.

The number of gymnasts who correctly answered all healthier snack questions increased from 4 out of 15 (27%) to 9 out of 15 (60%).

Results

Survey Results

- The number of gymnasts who correctly answered all healthier snack questions increased from 4 out of 15 (27%) to 9 out of 15 (60%).
- The number of gymnasts who correctly answered 75% of all healthier snack questions increased from 7 out of 15 (47%) to 12 out of 15 (80%).
- More research needs to be done on parental and other environmental influences on the nutritional statuses of the gymnasts.

- Gymnasts in general do not consume nutrient-dense foods often enough.
- A general lack of knowledge of nutrition

Conclusions

- American Gold gymnasts gained knowledge about healthy snack options available for performance athletes.
- Gymnasts expressed willingness to eat more nutrient-dense snacks.
- Gymnasts can better read and decipher nutrition labels.
- Gymnasts expressed willingness to eat more nutrient-dense snacks for performance athletes.
- Gymnasts can better read and decipher nutrition labels.
- Gymnasts expressed willingness to eat more nutrient-dense snacks.

Table 1
Nutritional values of protein bars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Protein (g)</th>
<th>Sugar (g)</th>
<th>Calories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cliff</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Valley</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zone</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gatorade</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nutritional values of protein bars