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## The Dietitian's Desk

Welcome to "The Dietitian's Desk!" This monthly newsletter is committed to providing insightful nutritional information and facts that promote a healthy lifestyle inside and outside of Sodexo's outstanding school nutrition program.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact me at:

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## Hydrating Young Athletes Michelle Martucci, RDN, LDN

Maintaining proper hydration is important for everyone, but it's especially important for an athlete. Even minor dehydration can affect an athlete's strength, endurance, speed, agility, and reaction time. Additionally, dehydration can cause muscle fatigue, which could increase risk of injury. Staying hydrated can also improve circulation, which means better delivery of oxygen and nutrients to the muscles.

Symptoms of dehydration include excessive thirst, fatigue, headache, muscle cramping, lightheadedness, dark yellow urine, and decreased performance. Observing urine color is an easy way to assess hydration. Pale yellow color (like lemonade) indicates being hydrated, while darker yellow (like apple juice) indicates dehydrated. The duration and intensity of training also influences fluid needs, so it will vary depending on the sport and the individual athlete. To maintain proper hydration throughout the day, a young athlete should drink  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 ounce of water per pound of body weight. The athlete may need even more on high intensity training days and game days.

If the athlete is working out for an hour or less, water is enough to remain hydrated. If the activity lasts for longer than an hour, is very intense, or it's in hot weather conditions, the athlete will also want to replenish lost electrolytes by drinking a sports drink. Ideally the sports drink should contain at least 110 to 240 mg of sodium per 8oz. serving. This will help replace both fluid and electrolytes lost through sweat.

Keep in mind certain foods, especially fruits and vegetables, contain a large percentage of water and can also help with hydration in addition to drinking plenty of water.

### Berry Watermelon Smoothie

Makes two 8oz servings

#### Ingredients:

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup coconut water
- 2 cups frozen berries
- 1 cup seedless watermelon, diced
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup plain or vanilla yogurt



#### Directions:

- Place coconut water, yogurt, and watermelon in blender, and then add frozen berries last
- Blend on low for ~30 seconds, and then blend on high for another 2 minutes until well blended.
- If the smoothie is too thick to blend, add 1-2 tablespoons more coconut water while blending.