

# STAY IN THE GAME!

## HEALTH TIPS FOR YOUNG ATHLETES

WWW.SMD-HEAT.ORG



### GET PLENTY OF REST

Over-training doesn't get you better! A Proper rest and recovery schedule can prevent burnout and injury. It will also help you improve physically and mentally.



### MAKE HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES

It's important to the development of young athletes to eat well-balanced meals. Natural foods are best i.e. fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, milk, cheese, and eggs. Go to [smd-heat.org](http://smd-heat.org) to see the "Athletes Plate."



### DRINK PLENTY OF WATER

Staying properly hydrated is essential for an athlete's performance and their overall health. Your performance can decrease by 30% when dehydrated.

### FOCUS ON CONDITIONING

When athletes add age-appropriate strength, speed, endurance, flexibility, and core exercise to their routine, they increase their physical, emotional, and mental strength.



### DEVELOP A GAME DAY ROUTINE



- Create a detailed game-day packing list.
- Healthy snacks and water for travel.
- Develop mental prep habits.
  - listening to music
  - visualizing performance

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# COVID-19 ATHLETES CHECKLIST

HEALTH TIPS FOR YOUNG ATHLETES



## BEFORE THE SPORTS SEASON STARTS

- Understand the safety rules for participation during COVID-19. Talk about what they mean with your child.
- Make sure your child has their own face mask, hand sanitizer, towel, water bottle, and tissues labeled with their name.
- Call your pediatrician to make an appointment if your child needs a pre-participation physical evaluation. It's also a good time to catch up on recommended vaccinations

To locate a COVID-19 vaccination clinic use the following links:

Charles County: <https://charlescountycovid.org>

State: <https://covidlink.maryland.gov>

## PRIOR TO PRACTICE OR GAMES

- Keep your child home from practice or games. Kids should isolate and test if they have any symptoms of COVID-19.
- Remind your child to wash their hands before arriving or use hand sanitizer if soap and water aren't available.
- Bring labeled (with name) personal sports equipment, water bottle, towel, tissues, hand sanitizer, and face mask.
- Regardless of vaccination status, kids should wear a mask indoors in areas with high transmission of COVID and shared transportation.

For children too young to get the COVID vaccine, it is especially important to continue steps that reduce the risk of spreading the virus. Talk with your child's pediatrician if you have any questions about your child participating safely in sports, based on vaccination eligibility, COVID-19 rates in your community and your child's health.

## **DURING SPORTS PRACTICES OR GAMES**

- If the sport is outdoors, athletes who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 should be encouraged to wear a face mask on the sidelines and during all group training and competition that involve continually being within 3 feet or less from others.
- Anyone not fully vaccinated should wear a face mask for all indoor sports training, competition and on the sidelines.
  - In counties with substantial or high transmission, all athletes should wear a mask for indoor training and competition, whether or not they are vaccinated.
  - Even if they're fully vaccinated, encourage your child to wear a mask in crowded indoor spaces like locker rooms, shared transportation, walking to and from the playing area, between practice drills, and on the sidelines.
  - If your child takes off their mask during a break, they should stay at least 3 feet away from everyone else.

However, masks should not be worn during:

- Water sports such as swimming, diving and water polo since wet masks may be difficult to breathe through. If a mask becomes soaked with sweat, it should be changed right away.
- Certain exercises in competitive cheerleading and gymnastics. The goal is to avoid the risk of masks getting caught on equipment, creating a choking hazard or blocking vision. Masks should go back on after these exercises, especially if athletes can't stay 3 feet apart from others inside.
- Face masks are also discouraged while wrestling, unless an adult coach or official is closely monitoring to ensure the masks don't become a choking hazard.

- All coaches, officials, spectators and volunteers should wear masks at all times. This helps set a good example for others and protects against transmission.
- To help protect everyone, try to avoid:
  - Sharing food or drink with teammates.
  - Cheering, chanting or singing when closer than 6-8 feet from others.
  - Spitting or blowing nose without a tissue.
- Minimize sharing sports equipment when possible.
- Tell a coach if you are not feeling well and leave the practice or game with a parent or caregiver.

## **AFTER SPORTS PRACTICES OR GAMES**

- Sanitize or wash hands.
- Wash or replace face masks, towel, and practice clothes or uniform.
- Clean personal sports equipment and water bottle.

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