

Evaluation of Average Nutrient Intakes of Collegiate Athletes and ROTC Cadets and Midshipmen

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Dietary intake can greatly affect athletic performance. A number of factors should be considered when determining diets for athletes, such as individual body types and sport-specific demands; however, there are common goals for which every athlete should strive. Such goals include: eating adequate amounts of energy and meeting recommendations for macro- and micronutrients. **PURPOSE:** To evaluate the dietary intakes of collegiate athletes and Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC) Cadets and midshipmen. **METHODS:** This cross-sectional study included 24 collegiate athletes (15 males, 9 females) and 16 ROTC Cadets and midshipmen (12 males, 4 females), 18 to 25 years of age. Participants completed a self-administered the Block Food Frequency Questionnaire (FFQ) that assessed their dietary patterns over the previous year. The FFQs were analyzed by a third party source. **RESULTS:** Average energy intake of all participants was 1817.8 ± 484.7 kilocalories (kcal). Average carbohydrate intake was 208.4 ± 8.4 grams (g), representing $45.8\% \pm 8.4\%$ of total energy consumed. Average protein intake was 72.1 ± 23.4 g, representing $15.8\% \pm 2.5\%$ of total energy intake. Average fat intake was 75.3 ± 25.6 g, representing $37.3\% \pm 7.5\%$ of total energy intake. Average fiber intake was 18.2 ± 9.6 g/day. Average vitamin intake was as follows: Vitamin A: 889.9 ± 415.8 retinol activity equivalents (RAE), β -carotene: 5535.7 ± 4497.4 micrograms (mcg), Vitamin C: 118.4 ± 51.0 milligrams (mg), Vitamin E: was 8.3 ± 3.6 mg, thiamin and riboflavin combined: 1.5 ± 0.5 mg, niacin: 21.0 ± 7.5 mg, Vitamin B₆ was 2.0 ± 0.8 mg. Average mineral intake was as follows: calcium: 826.0 ± 303.1 mg, zinc: 10.6 ± 3.1 mg, iron: 13.5 ± 4.4 mg, potassium: 2612.9 ± 877.9 mg, sodium: 3066.8 ± 1006.6 mg, magnesium: 323.2 ± 314.0 mg. **CONCLUSIONS:** Although they seem to be meeting energy recommendations, college athletes and ROTC Cadets and midshipmen are not meeting the recommendations of many macro- and micronutrients. It is important that athletes consume well-balanced diets to meet nutrition recommendations and best enhance their performance.