Basketball

Training, Health, and Fitness Guide

A quick-start resource for all levels of coaches.

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Partially sourced from: Special Olympics International Basketball Coaching Guide
HEALTH and FITNESS TALK

Suggestions for including a focus on year-round health and wellness in your sports practice.

“To be a great athlete, you need to be a healthy athlete.”

These discussions are laid out in balance, order, and accordance with Special Olympics Montana’s 8 weeks – 10 hours practice requirements. An included practice plan, which shows how these discussions can fit in a practice, is included in this same packet.

The goal of Health and Fitness Talk is to support the health, fitness, growth, and success of Special Olympics Montana competitors. It is designed to be used as a part of your practice season. The following discussions will provide competitors with the introductory knowledge to begin thought processes on:

- Identifying nutritious choices
- Balancing nutrition and portions
- Making healthy and balanced snack and meals choices
- The importance of hydration
- Identifying unhealthy beverage choices
- Understanding endurance and strength
- Understanding flexibility and balance
- Understanding the benefits and fun of exercise

If you are interested in a more in-depth Health and Fitness Program, explanations, examples, and lesson plans/guides, reach out to the Special Olympics Montana Senior Director of Innovation at 406-216-5327.

Practice Week #1 Discussion: NUTRITION: Eating right is important to your health and your sports performance. Eating right can be easy and enjoyable because there are many delicious healthy choices.

Your goal is to eat at least 5 total fruits and vegetables every day!

Tell your teammate the names of some Fruits:
- Fresh: Apples, Bananas, Berries, Grapes, Kiwi, Oranges
- Frozen Fruits
- Canned fruits (pick options with no added sugar)
- Dried fruits: Raisins, Bananas, Apricots

Tell your teammate the names of some Vegetables:
- Fresh: Asparagus, Broccoli, Carrots, Cauliflower, Green Beans, Peppers, Squash
- Lettuces and Dark Leafy Greens
- Frozen Vegetables
- Salads
- Canned Vegetables
You know fruits and vegetables are important for your health, but sometimes it can be difficult to know what other foods you should be eating. Here is a list of the other food groups and some great choices in each group that make up a healthy meal or diet.

**Grains:**
- Brown or Wild, or Unpolished Rice
- Oatmeal
- Whole Grain Bread
- Whole Grain Pasta
- Whole Grain Crackers
- Tortilla
- Flatbread

**Diary:**
- Low-fat or Skim Milk
- Low-fat Cheese
- Low-fat, unsweetened yogurt (watch the sugar!)
- Cottage Cheese

**Meats and Beans (Protein):**
- Lean Meats
- Eggs
- Fish (frozen, fresh or canned)
- Nuts
- Beans

-Tell your partner the Grains you ate yesterday. Dairy?
-Share with a teammate what protein (Meats & Beans) you had last night for dinner.

**Practice Week #2 Discussion: BUILDING A HEALTHY PLATE:** From last time, you now know what types of foods to eat. Here is how to build a healthy plate for a meal or for a snack.

- Watch the amounts of food you put on your plate (share/discuss the “Perfect Portions” diagram below).
- Save junk food like desserts, chips and sodas for special occasions.
- Make half of your plate fruits or vegetables (see diagram below).
- Fill the other half with foods like whole grains, dairy, and protein.
- Add more fruits and vegetables to your meals.
- Keep snacks healthy and small.

-Tell your teammate how to build a healthy plate.
-Name the 4 food groups that should make up a healthy meal.
Perfect Portions

Here is a fun way to remember how much to eat when you have a serving. The size of sports equipment on the left is about the same size as one serving of the foods on the right.

- A baseball is about the size of:
  - A serving of fruit
  - A serving of pasta
  - A serving of nuts

- A hockey puck is about the size of:
  - A serving of bread
  - A serving of bananas

- A small coin is about the size of:
  - A serving of cheese

Make half of your plate fruits or vegetables. Fill the other half with foods like whole grains, dairy, and protein.
Practice Week #3 Discussion: HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS: Snacking is a great way to make sure you are full of energy. It is important to keep your snacks healthy. Here are a few ideas for tasty snacks that are packed with fruits and vegetables.
   - Apple slices dipped in peanut butter
   - Low-fat unsweetened yogurt with berries
   - Low-fat cottage cheese with tomatoes
   - Carrots or peppers dipped in hummus
   - Celery topped with peanut butter and raisins

   - What snacks do you like the most? Are these healthy snacks or junk food snacks?
   - Tell your partner a healthy snack you could make for yourself.
   - Are these healthy snacks (thumbs up) or junk food snacks (thumbs down)?
     - Doritos
     - Banana with peanut butter
     - Snickers candy bar
     - A half cup of nuts
     - Carrot sticks
     - A cookie

HEALTHY MEALS: Add more fruits and vegetables to your meals. You can make any meal more nutritious with these simple suggestions.

**Breakfast**
- Have a piece of fruit with your meal.
- Vegetables like spinach, tomatoes, onions and peppers make great toppings on omelettes.
- Dried or cut fruit make great toppings on cereal and oatmeal as well.

**Dinner**
- Add vegetables like broccoli, squash, or peppers to pastas.
- Make a stir-fry with brown rice, your favorite lean meat or seafood, and vegetables.
- Add a side of steamed vegetables or a salad to any meal.
- Have some fruit as a healthy dessert.

**Lunch**
- Top sandwiches with plenty of vegetables like lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, and sprouts.
- Try apples, carrots, or celery for a crunchy side.
- Add leftover or canned vegetables like peas and carrots to soups.
- Make a salad with your choice of meat, cheese, lots of vegetables, and an oil-based dressing.
-What healthy items can you add to a salad (carrots, tomatoes, sunflower seeds, etc.)?
-Do you like oatmeal? What can add to oatmeal (banana, blueberries, etc.)
-Tell you partner how are you doing with the goal of having half your plate be fruits and vegetables.

**Reach Your Fit 5 Nutrition Goal**

It's easy to eat 5 fruits and vegetables in one day. Follow this sample meal plan and see how easy it is to reach your goal.

**Practice Week #4 Discussion:** HYDRATION: Water is another important fuel for sports and for life. Drinking the right amount of water is important for your health and can also help your athletic performance.

**Your goal is to drink 5 bottles of water every day!** Your water bottle should be 16-20oz or 500-600ml. Drink out of a sports water bottle to track your water intake. Sports bottles are refillable and can hold 16-20oz or 500-600ml of water.

-Do you have a water bottle? Do you take it with you when you go places? Do you bring it with you to practice?
-Are you drinking water with your meals?

**SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION:** Water helps to keep your body working properly. You lose water when you go to the bathroom, sweat, exercise or even breathe. If you lose too much water without drinking more, your body won’t work as well. This is called dehydration.
**Signs of Dehydration:**
- You feel thirsty
- You are tired or sluggish
- You have a headache
- Your mouth is dry
- Your urine is dark yellow or brown

*Tell your teammate two of the signs of dehydration.*
*Have you ever been dehydrated? How did you know? How did you feel?*

**Practice Week #5 Discussion:** **HEALTHY BEVERAGE CHOICES:** There are many beverage options available, but some of them are healthier choices than others. This guide can help you make the best choices to stay hydrated and perform your best.

*What is your favorite thing to drink? How often do you drink it (most days, sometimes, special occasions)?*
*What is the best thing to drink (water)? Why (no sugar)?*

**Sodas, energy drinks, and sports drinks are NOT good beverage choices.**
Sodas, energy drinks, and sports drinks have extra sugar and can make you gain weight. Energy drinks and many sodas also have caffeine. Caffeine does not help you stay hydrated.

**Moderate amounts of low-fat milk and 100% juice are also good choices in small amounts.**
Low-fat milk and 100% fruit juice are good choices with meals. Keep serving sizes small. No more than 3 cups of milk and 1 cup of juice per day.

**Water is the best choice for a beverage!**
Drink water every day! If you like flavored drinks, try sparkling water or add a few pieces of fruit into your water bottle.
You might consider bringing in some beverages and having your athletes look at the number of grams of sugar in each one. The athletes could count out the number of sugar cubes represented in each drink.

4 grams of sugar = 1 sugar cube

-How does it make you feel knowing that there are 10 teaspoons of sugar in a can of Coke?
-Do sports drinks like Gatorade have sugar in them? TV ads don’t tell you that, do they?
Practice Week #6 Discussion:  **EXERCISE- Endurance & Strength**: You can become a better athlete by enjoying physical activity outside of your sports practice. There are many ways to be physically active. Certain exercises can help you improve the skills needed for your sport. **Your goal is to do at least 5 days of exercise every week!**

*Types of Exercise: ENDURANCE STRENGTH FLEXIBILITY BALANCE*

**Endurance**

*Endurance is the ability of your body to keep moving for long periods of time.* Endurance can help you run farther distances without stopping and practice longer with fewer breaks.

**Try your favorite endurance exercise for 30 minutes, 5 days each week.**
Strength is the ability of your body to do work. Strength gives you the ability to jump higher, throw farther, and sprint faster.

Try to complete a workout for the entire body, 2-3 days each week.

-Is dancing exercise? (Yes, endurance.)
-Running, biking, and swimming are examples of what type of exercise? (Endurance)
-Push-ups and sit-ups are what kind of exercise? (Strength)
-What exercise do you do for endurance? Strength?

Practice Week #7 Discussion: EXERCISE- Flexibility & Balance:

Flexibility is the ability of your body to move easily in all directions. Being flexible makes it easier to do sports skills and helps prevent injuries to your muscles and joints!

Balance is the ability of your body to stay upright or stay in control of your movements. Balance helps you to stay in control when you are playing sports and helps you to avoid falls.
Flexibility is the ability of your body to move easily in all directions. Being flexible makes it easier to do sports skills and helps prevent injuries to your muscles and joints!

Try to complete a stretch for all body parts, 2-3 days each week!

Balance is the ability of your body to stay upright or stay in control of your movements. Balance helps you to stay in control when you are playing sports and helps you to avoid falls.

Try to complete a full body balance workout, 2-3 days each week!
Practice Week #8 Discussion: EXERCISE IS FUN!

It is easy to get in the right amount of exercise if you make it fun. Here are some tips to help you stay motivated to reach your Fit 5 goal.

Doing exercise together is a fun way to socialize with friends and family.

-How many of you could walk with a friend after school or work? Attend an exercise or fitness class? Bike on a trail? Take a walk with your mom or dad?
-What is a new exercise you would like to try?
-Share your exercise goal with a partner.

The diagrams in this document are from the Special Olympics Fit 5 Guide.

Other resources:

- **NCHPAD.org** This website has lots of health resources for people with disabilities. They have articles, videos, and even workout plans.
- **ChooseMyPlate.org** This website has it all! Learn how many servings of each food group you need, track your eating to see if you are eating healthy, and even find links to healthy recipes.
- **EatRight.org** This website also has loads of nutrition information, healthy recipes, and even a section to find a dietitian in your area.
- **Heart.org** (click on the heading, “Getting Healthy”) The American Heart Association has great resources for leading a healthy lifestyle, including a nutrition center with tons of recipes and cooking videos for heart-healthy recipes.
- **Diabetes.org** (click on the heading, “Food & Fitness”) The American Diabetes Association has lots of great articles for people who have diabetes. There are also many diabetes friendly recipes!
Warm-up

A warm-up period is the first part of every training session or preparation for competition. The warm-up starts slowly and systematically and gradually involves all muscles and body parts that prepare the athlete for training and competition. In addition to preparing the athlete mentally, warming up also has several physiological benefits:

- Raises body temperature
- Increases metabolic rate
- Increases heart and respiratory rate
- Prepares the muscles and nervous system for exercise

The warm-up is tailored for the activity to follow. Warm-ups consist of active motion leading up to more vigorous motion to elevate heart, respiratory and metabolic rates. The total warm-up period takes approximately 1/3 of the training session and immediately precedes the training or competition. A warm-up period will include the following basic sequence and components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slow aerobic jog</td>
<td>Heat muscles</td>
<td>3-5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stretching</td>
<td>Increase range of movement</td>
<td>5-10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event specific drills</td>
<td>Coordination preparation for training/competition</td>
<td>5-10 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jogging

Jogging is the first exercise of an athlete’s routine. Athletes begin warming the muscles by jogging slowly for 3-5 minutes. This circulates the blood through all the muscles, thus providing them greater flexibility for stretching. A jog should start out slowly, and then gradually increase in speed to its completion; however, the athlete should never reach even 50% of maximum effort by the end of the jog. Remember, the sole objective of this phase of the warm-up is circulating the blood.

Stretching

Stretching is one of the most critical parts of the warm-up and an athlete’s performance. A more flexible muscle is a stronger and healthier muscle. A stronger and healthier muscle responds better to exercise and activities and helps prevent injury. Please refer to Stretching within this section for more in-depth information.

Event Specific Drills

Drills are progressions of learning that start at a low ability level, advance to an intermediate level and, finally, reach a high ability level. Encourage each athlete to advance to his/her highest possible level.

Kinesthetic movements are reinforced through repetitions of a small segment of the skill to be performed. Many times, the actions are exaggerated in order to strengthen the muscles that perform the skill. Each coaching session should take the athlete through the entire progression so that he/she is exposed to the total of all of the skills that make up an event.

Basketball Warm-up Activities

Arm Circles
1. Hold arms out to sides at shoulder height.
2. Make 15 small circles rotating arms forward.
3. Stop, then repeat arm circles by rotating arms backward 15 times.
Footwork
1. Jog for 2 minutes.
2. Perform fundamental footwork skills such as Agility Footwork Activities (Page 49) down the court and back.
3. Combine running forward and backward, sliding, hopping, skipping, jumping, cutting, pivoting and stopping for 2-3 minutes.

Dribbling
Bend over, keep Head Up and Protect the ball with opposite-to-dribbling arm.
1. Dribble the ball with one hand 10 times.
2. Change to the other hand and dribble the ball 10 times.
3. Alternate hands (right-left-right-left) and dribble the ball 10 times.
4. Dribble the ball around and alternating each leg (in a figure “8”) 10 times.

Key Words
➢ Head Up, Protect

Partner Passing
Partners stand 2 meters apart with one ball between them.
1. Pass the ball back and forth, working on good form (Step And Push).
2. Make 10 bounce passes.
3. Make 10 passes in the air.

Key Words
➢ Step, Push
Shooting
Each athlete has a ball.

1. Place ball in proper hand position.
2. Bend and shoot ball overhead – Follow Through directly overhead.
3. Shoot 10 times to oneself and/or to partner or wall.
4. Move to basket and shoot 10 short bank shots (inside the lane at the block).

Key Words
- Follow Through
**Stretching**

Flexibility is a major element to an athlete’s optimal performance in both training and competing. Flexibility is achieved through stretching, a critical component in warming up. Stretching follows an easy aerobic jog at the start of a training session or competition.

1. Begin with an easy stretch to the point of tension, and hold this position for 15-30 seconds until the pull lessens. When the tension eases, slowly move further into the stretch, stretching until tension is again felt. Hold this new position for an additional 15 seconds. Each stretch should be repeated four to five times on each side of the body.

2. It is important to continue to breathe while stretching. As you lean into the stretch, exhale. Once the stretching point is reached, keep inhaling and exhaling while holding the stretch. Stretching should be a part of everyone’s daily life. Regular, daily stretching has been demonstrated to have the following effects:
   - Increase the length of the muscle-tendon unit
   - Increase joint range of motion
   - Reduce muscle tension
   - Develop body awareness
   - Promote increased circulation
   - Make you feel good

3. Some athletes, such as those with Down Syndrome, may have low muscle tone that makes them appear more flexible. Be careful to not allow these athletes to stretch beyond a normal, safe range. Several stretches are dangerous to perform for all athletes, and should never be part of a safe stretching program. Unsafe stretches include the following:
   - Neck Backward Bending Instead, try “Look to the right; then look to the left.”
   - Trunk Backward Bending

4. Stretching is effective only if the stretch is performed accurately. Athletes need to focus on correct body positioning and alignment. Take the calf stretch, for example. Many athletes do not keep the feet forward, in the direction that they are stretching.

![Correct and Incorrect Calf Stretches](image-url)
5. Another common mistake that athletes make when stretching is bending the back in an attempt to get a better stretch from the hips. An example is a simple sitting forward leg stretch.

Incorrect

Correct

6. As you can imagine, there are a host of stretches and variations of them to achieve your goals. However, we will focus on some basic stretches highlighting major muscle groups. In addition, we will also have some reminders to keep breathing while stretching. We will start at the top of the body and work our way to the legs and feet.
Upper Body

Chest Opener
- Clasp hands behind back
- Palms facing in
- Push hands toward sky

Triceps Stretch
- Raise arms over head
- Bring hand to back
- Pull slightly on bent elbow

Side Arm Stretch
- Raise arms over head
- Clasp hands, palms facing up
- Push hands toward sky

Side Stretch
- Raise arms over head
- Clasp forearms
- Bend to one side

Shoulder Triceps Stretch
- Take elbow into hand
- Pull to opposite shoulder

Shoulder Triceps w/ Neck Twist
- Take elbow into hand
- Pull to opposite shoulder
- Turn head away from elbow

Neck-Shoulder Stretch
- Hands behind back
- Clasp wrist, pull arm down
- Bend neck to opposite side

Trunk Twist
- Stand with back to wall
- Turn, reach palms to wall

Forearm Stretch
- Clasp hands in front of you
- Palms out
- Push out, away from body
Chest Stretch

Clasp hands behind neck
Push elbows back

Side view
**Low Back & Glutes**

**Low Back Tilts**
- Lie on back, knees bent
- Flatten small of back to ground

**Full Body Stretch**
- Lie on back, legs straight out
- Reach out with both legs and arms

**Groin Stretch**
- Sit, bottoms of feet touching
- Hold feet/ankles
- Bend forward from hips

**Supine Hamstring Stretch**
- Lie on back, legs outstretched
- Alternating legs, bring legs to chest
- Bring both legs towards chest
**Lower Body**

### Calf Stretch
- Stand facing wall/fence
- Bend forward leg slightly
- Bend ankle of back leg

### Calf Stretch w/Bent Knee
- Bend both knees to ease strain

### Side Hamstring Twist
- Sitting, bring one leg over knee of other
- Push bent leg with opposite elbow
- Turn head in opposite direction

### Hamstring Stretch
- Legs straight out and together
- Leg are not locked
- Bend at hips, reach toward ankle
- As flexibility increases, reach toward feet
- Push out toward heels, forcing toes to the sky

### Seated Straddle Stretch
- Legs straddled, bend at hips
- Reach out toward the middle
- Keep the back straight

### Hurdle Stretch
- Correct alignment of lead leg is important in hurdle stretch whether you are a hurdler or not. The foot must be aligned in the forward direction of running.
- Sit with legs outstretched, bend knee with bottom of foot touching opposite thigh
- Toes of the straight leg are toward sky
- Bend at hips in nice easy stretch
Step Ups

Step onto support, with bent leg
Push hips in toward support

Standing Hamstring Stretch

Rest heel of foot on support
Push chest-shoulders in and up

Ankle Rotations

Sitting, hold foot and ankle
Rotate ankle in both directions
**Stretching - Quick Reference Guidelines**

- **Start Relaxed**
  - Do not begin until athletes are relaxed and muscles are warm

- **Be Systematic**
  - Start at the top of body and work your way down

- **Progress from General to Specific**
  - Start general, then move into event specific exercises

- **Easy Stretching before Developmental**
  - Make slow, progressive stretches
  - Do not bounce or jerk to stretch farther

- **Use Variety**
  - Make it fun, work same muscle using different exercises

- **Breathe Naturally**
  - Do not hold breath, stay calm and relaxed

- **Allow for Individual Differences**
  - Athletes start and progress at different levels

- **Stretch Regularly**
  - Always include in warm-up and cool-down
  - Stretch while at home also
Elements of a safe and successful practice

- Check area for safety hazards
- Warmup
- Stretching
- Skills practice
- Competitive/fun session
- Cool down
- Wrap-up and conclusion
- HYDRATE!!!
- *Elements can be added and subtracted, as desired*

1 hour practice plan example

- 8:30-8:55 – Coach arrives and checks area for safety hazards.
- 8:55-9:00 – Walking or jogging to warm-up muscles.
- 9:00-9:10 – Stretching
- 9:10-9:25 – Skills practice
- 9:25-9:30 – Water break
- 9:30-9:40 – Skill practice
- 9:40-9:50 – Competitive/fun session
- 9:50-9:55 – Cool down
- 9:55-10:00 – Wrap-up and conclusion
Training Plan with Health and Fitness Elements

Elements of a safe and successful practice

- Check area for safety hazards
- Warmup
- Stretching
- Skills practice
- HYDRATE!!!
- Competitive/fun session
- Cool down
- Health and fitness discussion
- Wrap-up and conclusion
- *Elements can be added and subtracted, as desired*

1.25 hour practice plan example

- 8:30-8:40 – Coach arrives and checks area for safety hazards.
- 8:45-8:50 – Walking or jogging to warm-up muscles.
- 8:50-9:00 – Stretching
- 9:00-9:15 – Skills practice
- 9:15-9:20 – Water break
- 9:20-9:30 – Skill practice
- 9:30-9:40 – Competitive/fun session
- 9:40-9:45 – Cool down
- 9:45-10:00 – Health and Fitness Discussion, Wrap-up, and conclusion