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Optimizing Nutritional Strategies in Football: Practical Implementation

Delivering effective sports nutrition requires integrating scientific principles into real-world settings. Football players have dynamic and individualized needs influenced by training load, match schedules, and personal preferences.

Practical strategies must consider these variables to ensure optimal performance and recovery.



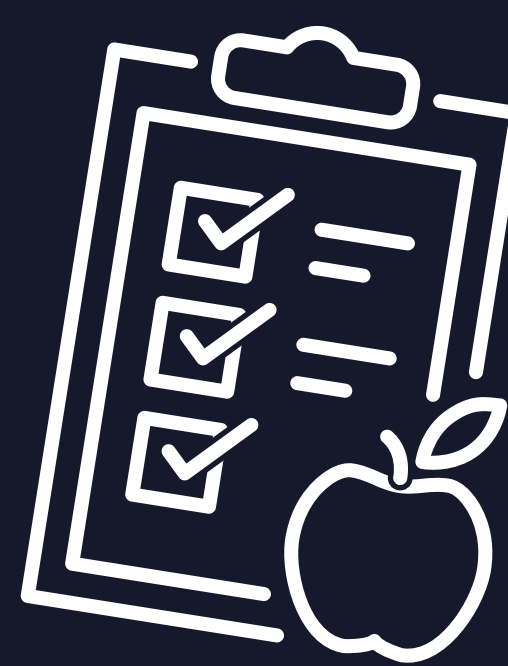
Understand the Context:

- Assess the player's internal and external environment, including training and match demands, injury status, and subjective feedback.
- Monitor key metrics like minutes played, fatigue levels, and recovery needs to tailor nutritional strategies.



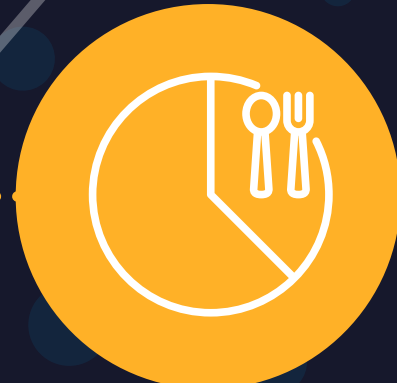
Prioritize and Periodize:

- Match nutrition priorities to training cycles and competitive periods.
- Adjust carbohydrate intake, hydration, and recovery strategies based on the intensity and volume of activity.



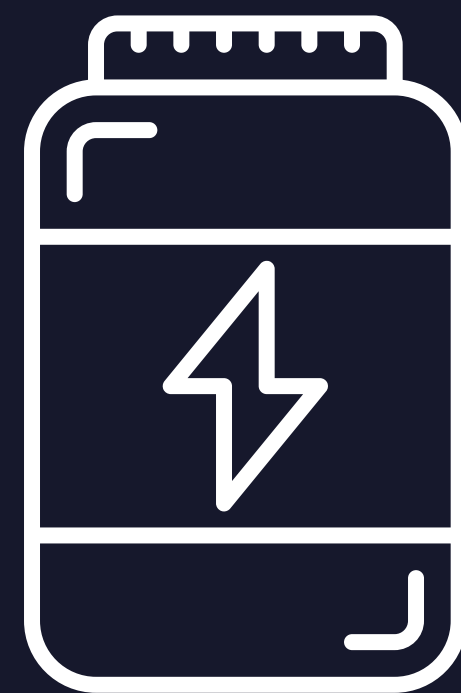
Collaborative Planning and Education:

- Involve players in co-creating nutrition plans to increase adherence and understanding.
- Provide consistent education on nutrition fundamentals and matchday fueling strategies, using practical examples to build habits.



Teamwork and Accessibility:

- Collaborate with chefs, medical staff, and support teams to create cohesive strategies.
- Make nutrition easy and accessible by providing pre-prepared meals, snacks, and hydration stations at key locations (training grounds, travel settings).



Take home messages

1 Individualize nutritional strategies by understanding the player's context and needs.



2 Foster collaboration and education

Foster collaboration and education to ensure practical implementation and adherence.



3 Plan and prioritize nutrition based on training cycles, match schedules, and recovery demands.



References

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2. Thomas DT, Erdman KA, Burke LM. "Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Dietitians of Canada, and the American College of Sports Medicine: Nutrition and Athletic Performance." J Acad Nutr Diet. 2016.
3. Phillips SM, van Loon LJ. "Dietary protein for athletes: From requirements to optimum adaptation." J Sports Sci. 2011.

