

The Best Team Snacks for Kids' Sports

• By Angela Bekkala



When it comes to kids' team sports, every parent will be in charge of the team snack at some point in the season. This always seems to beg the question: What should you bring?

Far too often after games, out come cupcakes, chips and sugary drinks. But why are kids chowing down on junk food or desserts after exercising? Would you eat a doughnut after a sweaty run or tough gym session? Snacks for the team doesn't have to mean junk food. Kids should be eating whole foods that help their bodies hydrate and refuel rather than sweets that give them a sugar high followed by a crash and burn.

There are plenty of healthy, natural snacks that are just as tasty and satisfying as the desserts too often found on the sidelines. These options are sure to be winners with your kid's team.

Fresh Fruit

You can't go wrong with fresh fruit after a sweaty practice or game. It's a refreshing treat and a great way to hydrate. These options are easy for groups:

- **Watermelon:** Slice it into wedges for little hands to easily grab and eat.
- **Frozen grapes:** You'll be surprised how quickly these disappear.

- **Clementines:** Pre-peel and throw them in a bag if you're feeling generous.
- **Bananas:** Bonus points if you bring individual nut butters for dipping.
- **Applesauce squeezers:** Delicious and easy!
- **Raisin boxes:** These are a total classic.
- **Fruit leather:** There are tons of homemade and store-bought options to choose from.

Veggies

Snag individual packs of sliced veggies or chop your own and pack them in baggies. Go for baby carrots, snap peas, cucumbers, celery, broccoli and radishes. Including personal-sized ranch dressings for dipping provides a no-veggie-left-behind guarantee.

Crackers and Grains

A favorite for those who like a little crunch, this is a versatile option that can easily be made whole grain, gluten-free and/or nut-free if needed.

- **Popcorn:** Go with a variety of flavors for a yummy medley.
- **Mini bagels with cream cheese, nut butter or sunflower butter:** Kids love anything they get to build themselves!
- **Pretzels:** Bring along hummus or another dip for extra nutrition.
- **Organic cheesy crackers:** We snuck a snack food on the list! But when combined with other options, these aren't such a bad choice.

Trail Mixes and Bars

As always, be sure you're aware of any team allergies, and adhere to the nut policy.

- **Granola bars:** Look for options with little to no added sugar.
- **Protein bars:** Kids RX bars, Larabars and Kind Bars are all great brands.
- **Trail mix:** An easy favorite with many combos to hit that sweet and salty craving.
- **Granola:** Another great mix with diverse flavors.

Dairy

This category provides a lot of options that are easy to buy in large, individually-wrapped quantities.

- **Flavored yogurt:** Just pay attention to added sugar!
- **Frozen yogurt squeezers:** These are cool, refreshing and fun to eat.
- **String cheese:** A classic kid's treat sure to be enjoyed.
- **Sliced cheese:** Bring crackers and sliced meats for DIY "lunchables," and they're guaranteed to be a crowd-pleaser!

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