

NUTRITION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOUNG ATHLETES

HEALTHY MIND HEALTHY BODY HEALTHY FUTURE

SMALL-SCALE PARTNERSHIPS IN YOUTH | 2025-1-PL01-KA210-YOU-000361815



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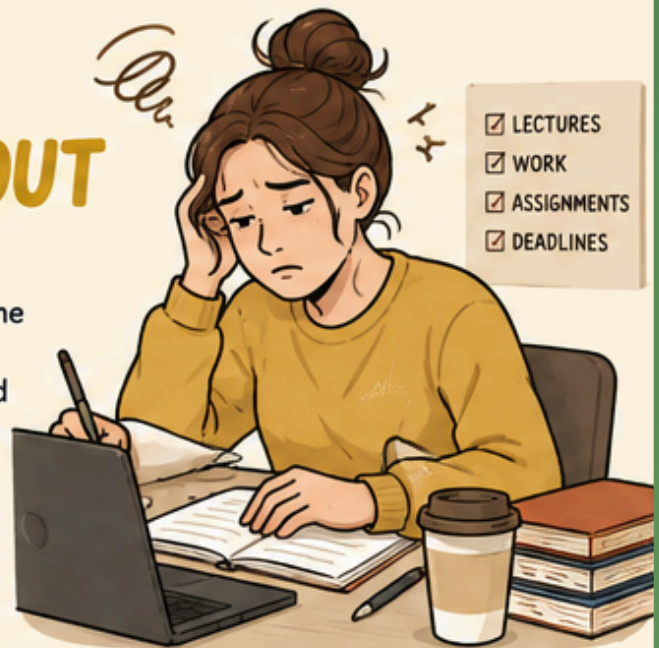


CASE STUDY 4

BUSY BUT BURNED OUT

Meet Emma (20)

Emma is a university student who also has a part-time job. She spends her weekdays rushing between lectures, work, and assignments. She feels exhausted most of the time and believes she has no energy for exercise. On weekends, she usually stays in bed or watches series because she feels she needs to "recover." She often feels overwhelmed and has noticed that her mood has become worse over the last few months.



YOUR TASK

Prepare a Movement Prescription that helps Emma regain energy, manage stress, improve her mental wellbeing and create a realistic routine that fits her busy lifestyle.

1. Diagnosis

Main challenge:

Emma's demanding schedule leaves little room for self-care, causing chronic fatigue, stress, and declining mental wellbeing.

Impact on physical and mental health:

- Mental exhaustion.
- Low energy levels.
- Increased stress.
- Lack of recovery and relaxation.
- Reduced motivation for healthy habits.

2. Recommended Activities

- Yoga.
- Walking.
- Pilates.
- Relaxation and breathing exercises.

3. Weekly Plan and Menu

Movement Plan

- Daily: 15–20-minute walk.
- Daily: 5-minute breathing exercise before bed.
- Monday & Thursday: 30-minute yoga session.
- Saturday: 45-minute Pilates or stretching class.

Emma's probably skips meals, eats quickly, or rely on whatever food is fast or convenient. That's why her nutrition plan should be simple, practical, and easy to prepare in advance. Priorities are regular meals, proper energy, protein, complex carbohydrates, healthy fats, fruit and vegetables, and hydration.

Breakfast – quick but nourishing. Avoid starting a long day with only coffee. A breakfast combining carbohydrates, protein, fruit, and healthy fats is a balanced start.

- Greek yoghurt with berries, oats, and chia seeds
- Wholegrain toast with avocado and scrambled eggs
- Cottage cheese with fruit and wholegrain crackers

Such products provide carbohydrates and fibre, while yoghurt, eggs, and cottage cheese provide protein. Fruit adds vitamins and minerals, while nuts and seeds provide healthy fats.

Lunch – practical meals for a busy university/work day. Emma can prepare lunch the evening before or prepare several portions for the following days.

- Quinoa bowl with chicken, roasted vegetables, and olive oil
- Wholegrain pasta with tuna, tomatoes, and spinach
- Lentil and vegetable soup with wholegrain bread
- Wholegrain wrap with chicken, hummus, salad, and vegetables

A balanced lunch can help prevent the afternoon energy crash and reduce the likelihood of relying on snacks or takeaway food when Emma is under time pressure.

Snack – something easy to take with her and fast to eat

- Banana + handful of walnuts
- Natural yoghurt + fruit
- Hummus + wholegrain crackers
- Cheese + wholegrain crackers and cherry tomatoes

Dinner – simple recovery meal. Dinner does not need to be complicated after a long day. It should provide protein, vegetables, carbohydrates, and healthy fats.

- Baked fish with potatoes and vegetables
- Vegetable tart with wholegrain bread and salad
- Wholegrain pasta with beans, vegetables, and olive oil

Emma should focus on nourishing and recovering for dinner.

Hydration

Emma should keep a reusable water bottle with her during university and work. A practical starting point is around 2 litres of water per day. Coffee can remain part of her routine if she enjoys it, but it should not replace meals or water.

The advice for Emma is to Prepare Once and Eat Easily. Because lack of time is one of Emma's biggest barriers, preparing few portions in advance can make healthy choices much easier.

Why Will the Nutrition Plan Help?

Regular and balanced meals can help Emma maintain a more consistent energy supply during demanding days and provide protein, carbohydrates, healthy fats, fibre, vitamins, and minerals needed for everyday functioning and physical recovery.

For Emma, the psychological aspect is equally important. Healthy eating should not become another responsibility that creates stress. Simple preparation, regular meals, and flexible food choices can make nutrition easier to manage and support a healthier relationship with food.

Combined with walking, yoga, Pilates, and relaxation exercises, these habits can contribute to a more balanced routine in which food, movement, sleep, and recovery work together rather than becoming additional sources of pressure.

5. Healthy Habit Challenge: Take a 15-minute walk during your busiest day of the week.

6. Motivational Message:

"Taking care of yourself is not a break from productivity-it is what makes productivity possible."

