

Healthy Eating for Soccer Families

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Soccer families spend a lot of time in the car and on the road, and healthy eating can sometimes take a backseat. Soccer moms, **Laura Einbinder** and **Kate Scarlata**, know all about eating on the run, and have come up with guidelines to help keep families eating healthy even when there is no time to cook. The women, who are registered dietitians, penned the book, "**Real People Need Real Food: A Guide to Healthy Eating for Families Living in a Fast Food World.**" The popular sentiment of the book is "those who don't have time for health will have time for illness later."

While Einbinder is just starting down the road of soccer balls, jerseys and screaming kids filling up her car, Scarlata is a seasoned veteran. All three of her children play soccer and her 10- and 13-year-old sons are involved in travel soccer clubs. Over decaf skim milk lattes, the friends found very similar ideals and wanted to share their perspectives with other families. XK San Diego asked Scarlata how Real People Need Real Food can help San Diego soccer families.



(Photo Courtesy: Laura Einbinder)

How did you draw on your own experience to write this book?

Well, it is one thing to tell clients to follow certain nutrition goals and yet it is very different when you actually do them yourself. Both Laura and I have knowledge first hand on living life as moms of active children and have been able to integrate our nutrition training and experience into providing our children healthy foods despite our busy lifestyles.

How have you and your family not fallen into the trap of poor eating habits even while having to "live out of the car?"

To avoid eating out of the car or grabbing fast food on the run, I often pack a healthy picnic lunch for the drive to the game or the ride home. Often, I put a kid-friendly meal in our slow cooker such as BBQ chicken and rice, and when we arrive home from the game we have a hot meal ready to eat. I also pre-cook foods such as a chicken soup, pasta salad with chicken and veggies that are quick, re-heatable items to enjoy when we come home.

A lot of times soccer families fit in dinner by bringing it to the sidelines, any advice for when fast food is a must?

For those who do end up at a fast food restaurant —and most well meaning parents do on occasion— choose wisely. Our book suggests tips on dining out and fast food restaurants, helping you choose the better food items.

Often, college players are so busy, a meal becomes a luxury. What is your advice?

I would advise that they always bring snacks, such as Kashi granola bars (high protein and fiber), trail mix and fruit. These will at least keep their blood sugar up while providing some good protein sources for working muscles. Of course, get adequate fluids too; hydration is a must. Athletes need to refuel regularly.