



TOURNAMENT GUIDELINES

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Tournaments are a great learning experience for all players. The physical demands and intensity level heighten everyone's (parents, players, coaches) emotions. In order to prepare properly, give your team its best chance for success and gain the most from the experience there are many factors that need to be considered.

Player Preparations to be physically ready to Play

The most difficult requirement for players will be the physical energy expended over two days. Players must rest, eat and drink properly the week preceding a tournament. Stick to your regular schedule with 8 - 10 hours of sleep. Travel, excitement, fatigue, injuries, noise and new surroundings can all upset your sleep patterns at tournaments. Set aside extra time to settle down before going to bed. Rest/nap between games.

The energy your body is able to expend depends on two significant factors. The strength (endurance) of your engine and the type of fuel you are using. Endurance and overall fitness are paramount to your soccer success. They are developed through the long term, gradual benefits of hard, hard work and proper rest before and at the tournament. The hotel is your home for the weekend, treat it as such. Get to bed early, rest between games and be quiet and respectful of other guests and hotel employees.

The fuel your body uses depends on your diet. The week preceding a tournament is the most important in fueling your engine. Eat three wholesome meals and several healthy snacks a day leading up to a tournament. Foods high in complex carbohydrates and low in saturated fats are best. Fruits, vegetables, salads, pastas, whole grain cereals and breads are best. At the tournament the food you eat will not be ingested quickly enough to be a significant benefit to your energy level. Eat light and give your body plenty of time to digest the food prior to a game.

The most important thing you can put into your body at or before a tournament is water. You will perspire profusely for long periods of time at a tournament. Muscle cramps, dizziness, fatigue and heat exhaustion are all symptoms caused mainly by lack of water. Begin two days before and continue at the tournament to sip small amounts of water throughout the day. Do not drink carbonated pop, condensed juices or drinks with caffeine. All of these cause the body to actually end up with less water in your system than before you drank it. Sport drinks are good, cold water is best.

Pools, spas and steam baths are a wonderful luxury at a tournament hotel. All will sap you of your much-needed endurance. Limit your time in a cool water pool and do not go.