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## Nutrition knowledge in pediatric and adolescent athletes

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Despite the extensive research to determine the proper diet for children and create appropriate programs and policies, there has been little inquiry as to whether children themselves know what they should be eating. Childhood obesity has reached a prevalence of 20% of all children in the United States (US) and is recognized as a risk factor for obesity during adulthood, as well as other diseases during childhood and adulthood. It is, therefore, an epidemic at the forefront of many physicians' and lawmakers' minds. While healthier options have been added to school lunches, more physical activity has been incorporated into the school day, and nutritional information has been made more available to parents, the movement to end childhood obesity will likely only succeed if the children understand what proper nutrition is. It is ultimately the child's responsibility to choose the healthy option, and while children are increasingly doing so, there is still considerable room for improvement. Furthermore, many children, even those in healthy weight ranges, suffer from nutrient deficiencies, which can have serious consequences. This survey-based study (results pending) aim to investigate elementary school-age children's knowledge of nutrition. The findings will suggest whether our society needs to place a higher priority on teaching young children healthy eating, instead of simply providing them with healthy food and not explaining its nutritional benefits. They will also give an indication of how much children may know about the relation of what they eat to what they can do in sports and other physical activities, the latter being a focus of more recent efforts to stem the tide of chronic illnesses in the US population.

### Biography

Lauren Schaffer is a current undergraduate student at the University of Pennsylvania majoring in Biology. She plans to attend medical school after earning her Bachelor of Arts degree. She has published 3 papers in medical peer-reviewed journals with more under review and is currently in a summer research program at the Mayo Clinic.

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