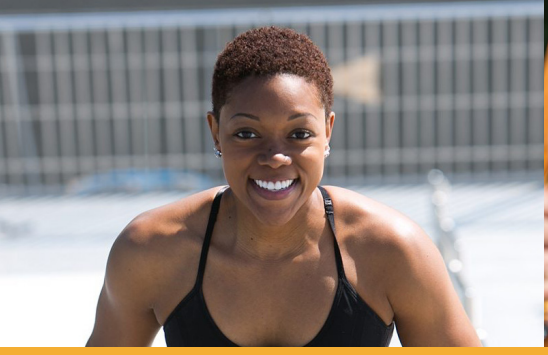

SPORTS NUTRITION FOR YOUR EYES

There is no substitute for a well-balanced diet. However, since most of us don't get all the nutrients we need from the foods we eat, many athletes augment their diet with supplements such as high-quality vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients that have been shown, through research, to help optimize performance.

Vision, just like speed and strength, is a critical component in how well you play any sport. Vision has the potential to affect your performance including clarity of sight, ability to perform specific tasks, and how you process and respond to what you see on the field.[1]

Sports Vision professionals with expertise can work with athletes to improve visual function through training and provide guidance on nutrients that support eye health and contribute to enhanced athletic performance.

Visit **www.sportsvision.pro** for more information.

VITAMINS, MINERALS, AND CAROTENOIDS

Research has shown that incorporating certain vitamins, minerals, and essential fatty acids into your diet can not only lower the risk of certain eye diseases like age-related macular degeneration and cataracts, but can also help maintain or enhance some visual skills that are essential for peak sports performance.

Studies suggest that carotenoids, natural pigments that give the green, yellow, orange, and red color to fruits and vegetables, are one type of nutritional supplement that can contribute to the health of your eyes and enhanced visual performance. Eating carotenoid-rich foods, like yams, kale, spinach, watermelon, cantaloupe, tomatoes, carrots, and oranges, can help protect healthy cells in the eyes from UV and blue light damage and strengthen your immune system and overall health. However, it's difficult for most people to consume enough dietary carotenoids as part of their regular diet.

Several published studies show that good nutrition, specifically high levels of lutein, zeaxanthin, and meso-zeaxanthin, three carotenoids found in the macula, the most sensitive part of the retina in the back of the eye, have measurable effects on visual function, **which may lead to improvements in on-field performance.**[2,3,4] Most nutrition formulations designed to protect the eye will include one or more of these macular carotenoids.

IMPROVING VISUAL PERFORMANCE THROUGH NUTRITION & SUPPLEMENTATION

CONTRAST SENSITIVITY

Athletes rely on good contrast sensitivity to quickly identify and pick up the location of objects like a ball, field borders, or other players, in visually demanding environments. For example, a baseball player needs to accurately track the ball as it leaves the hand of a pitcher or off the bat of hitter under all kinds of weather and lighting conditions.

SPEED OF VISUAL PROCESSING

For hockey players, a quick response can help them control a rebound or create a turnover; help a center to win the draw, and allow a goalie to make a save. Esports athletes must continuously adapt to fast moving targets and objects and make fast decisions. Increases in processing speed yield faster reaction times, more accurate prediction of events, and better anticipation/decision making.

GLARE RECOVERY

Glare from the sun or stadium lighting, as well as when the sun is reflected off surfaces such as water, snow, pavement, and sand, can cause an individual to squint their eyes, blink rapidly, avert their eyes from their task, and generally lose concentration – all factors that negatively impact sports performance. For a wide receiver, glare can produce problems both in detecting a pass and judging its trajectory and time of arrival. Furthermore, after looking at a bright source of light, it takes time to recover normal vision.

BEFORE TAKING A NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENT

TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR: Before starting a regimen of eye vitamins or any dietary supplement, be sure to first consult with your doctor. Make sure that these supplements are safe to be taken along with any other supplements or over-the-counter or prescription medication you are taking or if you are pregnant or have a specific medical condition.

DO YOUR RESEARCH: Manufacturers and distributors must make sure that all claims and labeling information are truthful and not misleading. They cannot claim that their product cures, treats, or reduces the risk of a specific disease or condition unless it has been proven by research to do so. Check whether advertised claims are backed by scientific or anecdotal evidence.

CHECK FOR THIRD PARTY TESTING: Look for products that have been certified by an independent third-party company. Look for products that are NSF Certified for Sport® which shows that what is on the label is in the bottle and that the product does not contain unsafe levels of contaminants, prohibited substances or masking agents.

NSF CERTIFIED SPORT

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ISVA
International Sports Vision Association™
Maximizing Athletic Performance Through Vision Training and Enhancement

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