

Dixons Carphone Race to the Stones 2019

RACE TO THE STONES

Nutrition Tips – Running

Tip 1:

Get the basics right: where is your BMI (body mass index)?

You may feel that starting training means starting a “new you” or conversely you need to “eat to train”. The balance needs to be between making the most of your nutrition with your training and not to over or under fuel. Top tips: monitor your weight – if it changes more than a 1-2lbs a week then this is an unhealthy weight change.

Tip 2:

Do I need fat in my diet? Diet and exercise often causes people to think of only carbs and protein in terms of important macros. Fat is important – it is essential for fat-soluble vitamin provision and absorption, and essential fatty acids. Fat should form a minimum of 20-25% of total energy intake in your diet. At the moment high fat diets are not recommended for athletes.

Tip 3:

Pre run/workout fuelling: To be well nourished and ready to attack the next exercise session again and again, you need to make sure your pre-exercise fuelling is right. Otherwise you are likely to fatigue quicker, be slower, not be able to run as hard and it increases chances of getting injuries and ailments. A main meal should be eaten no further away than 2-4 hours, with a small snack in the two hours before you go out for a run. For example, lunch is at 1pm, have a snack at 4 or 5, leave work and you are ready to run and train at your best!

Tip 4:

Hydration: Ensure adequate hydration throughout the day, not just when you’re running! Ever noticed how when you drink a whole bottle of water after exercising you need to go to the toilet straight after? The beverage hydration index (BHI) – how much water is retained by the body – can help with this. Milk, orange juice or oral rehydration solutions (or isotonic sports drinks) are going to ensure better rehydration after a sweaty session!

Myth: Drinking tea and coffee will cause you to become dehydrated. Actually in habitual coffee/tea drinkers, there is hardly any effect on urine losses and hydration with tea and coffee.

Tip 5:

Caffeine: low doses of caffeine (1-3mg/kg, or 70-150mg) taken just before and during exercise may help during training and racing when the fatigue is kicking in and you need a pick-me-up. More is not better – there is a fine balance between helping and hindering your running, and too much can lead to diarrhoea, anxiety or heart palpitations.

Caffeine sources:

One pro-plus caffeine tablet: 50mg

One mug of instant coffee: 100mg

Can of cola: 40mg

Mug of tea: 75mg

50g milk choc: 25mg caffeine

Tip 6:

Recovery between tough sessions: Exercise stimulates muscle building, so eating protein within 2 hours post workout (e.g. a snack or the next meal) will help achieve this. A protein source that contains leucine (an essential amino acid) will be of added benefit to optimal muscle recovery and growth.

Examples of foods that will contain about the right amount of leucine and protein for optimum muscle repair and adaptation include:

- 3 eggs (e.g. scrambled eggs, omelette etc.)
- ½ pint of milk, cereal and a yoghurt
- 2 tubs of yoghurt
- 60g of ham and 2 slices of cheese

Tip 7:

Don't forget about the recovering carbs: Between race days and when training sessions are close together, you need to make sure carbohydrates are also part of your recovery. Shorter than the "protein window", if you have short amounts of time between sessions (approx. 8 hours or less) then the "carbohydrate window" is only 30mins!

Tip 8:

Do I need to take protein supplements? Hard training will increase your protein requirements, but taking supplements isn't necessary. Time commitments, meal planning and appetite post exercise can contribute to the decision of whether you need to supplement. Normal food contains more than the isolated protein and can easily be used to meet post exercise nutrition needs as well as often be more palatable. Other considerations need to be on protein powders. There are many, each with their own attributes, so try a few to see which is best to suit your needs.

Tip 9:

Illness and nutrition: We all know becoming ill can hinder our training and performance. Strategies to help reduce the risk of coming down with anything include not sharing drinking bottles, towels or cutlery with others, washing fruit and veg before using, and avoid excessive drinking or binge drinking of alcohol as this impairs immune function for several hours, particularly after strenuous training or competition. If the common cold strikes, potentially there may be some impact on the number of days you are out if you take a zinc lozenge at onset of any symptoms (although some people do experience nausea when taking these). With an increase in training and stress on the

body, there is also some evidence that Vitamin C may also be beneficial in reducing the risk of developing a cold in the first place.

Tip 10:

Bone health: Running and a low body weight are often associated together, sometimes causing poor bone health, which can contribute to the development of stress fractures. As well as including weight bearing/resistance exercise in your training you need to ensure you have an adequate calcium intake. Dairy products are a great choice for the protein and calcium. Other non-dairy sources of calcium include soya, tofu, fortified bread, small fish with their bones (e.g. tinned sardines/salmon) and even broccoli and spring greens can add into the overall calcium intake. To ensure you are taking in enough calcium, ensure you are spreading calcium-containing foods into your day.

Tip 11:

Do you deserve a drink after that long run? Alcohol may affect post exercise rehydration and body carbohydrate storage. Furthermore, proper recovery strategies (both eating and drinking) are likely to be missed once alcohol starts flowing, so ensuring your re-hydration and nutrition is done prior to alcohol intake will help you with the recovery and socializing associated with running!

Tip 12:

Muscle cramps: The most agreed upon theory for muscle cramps is fatigue in the muscle groups most directly worked in exercise, such as the calf with running. Training helps prevent this, as does drinking little and often and ensuring you fuel during runs. Although some people are “salty sweaters” there is little evidence that sodium/salt losses cause cramps.

Tip 13:

Sodium: Sodium is the principal electrolyte lost in sweat and during prolonged bouts of heavy sweating. Adding a little salt with the post-exercise meal and fluid replacement can help for quicker rehydration – as your body will hold onto more water and the salt will make you drink more too! Although quite trendy at the moment, the addition of potassium and magnesium to your recovery drinks won't offer any benefit to rehydration and losses are minimal compared to sodium with sweating.

Tip 14:

Runner's gut: You may experience stomach pain and cramps, diarrhoea and bleeding when you're ramping up your training. This is normal. During exercise, blood is sent off to your muscles and skin to fuel them and help keep you cool. The effects of this blood shunting away from your gut and causing upsets are increased with higher intensity workouts and when you're dehydrated. Therefore try and go to the toilet before you go out running, eat a low fibre snack before running and staying hydrated is important to reduce the

side effects as much as possible and with training your body will adapt to reduce this happening – so don't let it put you off running!

Tip 15:

Are your runs lasting longer than 1hr? This is where eating whilst running can actually help you maintain your pace and training performance as you use up your body's energy stores. Glucose (broken down from carbohydrates) and sucrose (table sugar) based carbohydrates are better absorbed than fructose (found in fruit and honey) so may be better choices on your runs. Symptoms of not taking on enough carbohydrate intake include low levels of energy, heavy legs, fatigue, "hitting the wall", a slow rate of recovery, loss of concentration, dizziness, irritability and fainting. Practice in training, but you should be aiming for at least 60g carbohydrate an hour when your runs are lasting longer than 2½ hours.

Tip 16:

Nutrition and sleep: Intensifying training can cause poor sleep quality and quantity, which may impact performance. Making sure your diet has a good amount of carbohydrate in it can help, as well as good quality protein, but a high fat diet may cause lower total sleep time. Foods containing tryptophan, e.g. turkey and fish, help to make melatonin, which improves sleep/wake cycles.

Tip 17:

Sports drinks, bars and gels: Convenient, compact and easy to carry these are likely to form part of your training and racing diet. Top tip: try as many as you can! Each different product has different additions (such as caffeine, vitamins) and so depending on what works best for you is the one to choose. Remember, sports drinks can also help with fluid and fuel, so they may be more useful than bars and gels due to being "all-in-one". Ensure you take gels with some water, as otherwise you run the risk of gut issues due to the high concentration of the sugars in your stomach.

Tip 18:

Pasta Party: During the two day races OR the night before, if you're taking on the ultras over 24hours, you will more than likely be 'carb loading'. Doing this helps create additional energy to prolong the time until fatigue sets in. In the 2-3 days before race day, increase carbohydrate in your diet alongside a reduced training schedule to load your muscles with glycogen (carbohydrate stored in muscle).

Tip 19:

Beetroot shots? Dietary nitrate (found in beetroot juice) has been shown to improve blood and oxygen circulation around the body, improving performance. 2 shots a day for a few days before can help OR 2-3 hours prior to competition can help improve performance. Be weary – your pee also changes colour!

Tip 20:

Ready for the big race? Ensure you are practicing your nutrition and fluid plans prior to race day, and don't rely on thirst and hunger to determine when you eat. As well as a running plan, you need a nutrition plan to reap the benefits from your weeks of training.