

NUTRITION PLANNING

One of the most important things most athletes can do to improve their performance is to improve their nutrition. There are lots of diets and many theories concerning nutrition, but following just these 3 keys you can vastly improve your health & performance.

1. Eliminate processed foods from your diet. 2. Get the majority of your calories from fruits, vegetables and lean protein. 3. Limit starchy & sugary foods to during and after your longest or most intense workouts.

Quick tips: Use cold fluids as much as possible, your body absorbs them more rapidly than warm fluids. Use frozen or insulated water bottles/hydration packs.

If you finish an event weighing the same or more than when you started, you have overhydrated. If you've dropped 3% or more, dehydration has occurred. Up to 2% weight loss is safe and reasonable.

Prior to Race Day. reduce your food intake as your training volume tapers down. Eat "normal" foods during this period, do not experiment.

Day before race. Eat a large breakfast with an emphasis on moderate to low glycemic index carbohydrate. Eat a large lunch when next hungry, again emphasizing moderate-low GI foods. Have a moderately sized dinner that is "normal" food for you but with limited fiber intake. Stay well hydrated throughout the day. Use extra salt on food.

Race day breakfast. Take in 300-400 calories from moderate to low GI foods 4 to 5 hrs prior to start (if it's an Ironman you need to bump this up to 500-800). Practice this before bricks and long workouts. If you have a nervous stomach use liquid or semi-solid foods (ensure, ultracal or boost). Either go back to bed after breakfast or relax/meditate.

Pre-Race. Eat no more than 200 calories/hr in the last 3 hours and stay with liquid or semi-solid foods. Think calming thoughts or listen to calming music. When stressful thoughts appear recall previous successes in training and racing. Eat/drink nothing in the last hour except water or a diluted sports drink.

Swim. Do not go anaerobic at the start of the swim—hold back

Bike. Drink water before starting with any calories. Begin sipping water about 10-15 minutes out of T1 and continue for 20 minutes before taken in any calories. Aim for 250-500 calories per hour based on tolerance for food intake. Carry most of your calories with you on the bike & carry a little more than you anticipate needing. If you have trained with electrolyte tabs make sure you take them as you trained with them, don't try them for the first time during your race. If you are going to eat solid foods during the race the middle of the bike segment is the best place to use them, but it is recommended to get your calories in liquid or gel form. If you are faced with any stomach issues

regardless of your time or pacing goals you should slow down. You cannot push through stomach issues. Don't try anything during the race that you haven't used during training.

Run. Divide the run into 3 parts. Part 1 find a comfortable pace and try to get in some liquid calories. If you use gels make sure that you take in at least 8 oz water for each packet to avoid dehydration. Part 2 run steadily, continue taking in calories (approx 150-200/hour). Part 3 is time to push your pace up & finish strong!

Recovery & post workout are vitally important to your training program. In the first 20-30 min after a workout use a recovery drink that contains both carbohydrates & protein in a 4:1 ratio. You can buy a commercial product (like Accelerade or Recoverite) or you can use low fat chocolate milk or add a couple of tablespoons of sugar to skim milk. This 20 min period is critical for reloading glycogen to the muscles, if you miss this window you can push time to full recovery from the workout (or race) several hours or even days. Eat any foods that appeal to you post workout but avoid fiber and spicy foods. Do not drink water only as this may lead to hyponatremia.