

Nutrition for Runners

- Why is nutrition important?

- ✓ Diet & nutrition effect performance
- ✓ Calories are energy!!
- ✓ Food is fuel!!

- What you get from food (nutrients)

- ✓ Carbohydrates

- ➔ #1 fuel source for your body
- ➔ Fruits, vegetables, breads, rice, pasta, etc.
- ➔ Should make up 50-60% of your diet

- ✓ Protein

- ➔ Used to repair & rebuild muscles damaged by training & racing
- ➔ Lean meat, fish, chicken, beans, milk, yogurt, cheese, etc.
- ➔ Red meat has high iron content needed to repair red blood cells to carry oxygen
- ➔ Should make up 25% of your diet

- ✓ Fats

- ➔ Main form of stored energy in the body
- ➔ You need fat for your body to function properly!
- ➔ Good fat v. Bad fat
 - Good: olive oil, canola oil, omega 3 & 6 fatty acids (fish) = “unsaturated”
 - Bad: butter, margarine, Crisco (lard), trans-fats (deep fried) = “saturated”
- ➔ Should make up 25% of your diet

- ✓ Vitamins & Minerals

- ➔ Body regulators: needed for your body to function properly
- ➔ Zinc (immune system), iron (carry O₂), calcium (strong bones), etc.
- ➔ Found in fruits, vegetables, & dairy (zinc & iron in red meat)
- ➔ Multivitamin ok, don't overdose! More is not better!!

- ✓ Water

- ➔ Vital to athletic performance!
- ➔ Even minor dehydration can negatively effect performance
 - According to a study by the University of Capetown, the average runner will lose 40oz of fluid per hour at 77% F, with relative humidity of 55%.
- ➔ Drink throughout the day.
- ➔ Carry water on your run if you are running for longer then an hour.
- ➔ Drink when you are thirsty but don't over drink!
 - Five days before the Boston Marathon, the New England Journal of Medicine published a major article showing that 13 percent of runners in the 2002 Boston Marathon might have suffered from hyponatremia, a dangerous condition caused by drinking too much fluid.
 - Hyponatremia, or low sodium, is caused when over hydration during exercising dilutes the sodium level in your body and can be dangerous.

- **Why all foods aren't equal**
 - ✓ All foods have different amounts of the above nutrients
 - ✓ Ex. Baked v. Deep fried

- **Specific needs of a runner**
 - ✓ Need more protein for muscle repair & building
 - ✓ Need more carbohydrates for fuel
 - ✓ Need more iron to carry oxygen
 - ✓ Need more calcium for bones and muscles

- **Pre race / workout meal & snacks**
 - ✓ Eat breakfast- fuels your muscles and kick starts your metabolism. At least have something light if you are running first thing in the morning (Gatorade, a banana, etc).
 - ✓ Eat a lunch that doesn't sit heavy in your stomach if you are running later in the day
 - ✓ Practice eating different things at lunch to see how you feel at practice
 - ✓ Eat a light, carbohydrate rich snack before afternoon or evening workouts.
 - ✓ Stick with water before you race / workout- Gatorade right before a workout / race causes a blood sugar crash. Better to be consumed an hour before or during the workout.

- **Post race / workout meal & snacks**
 - ✓ Eat a snack within 15-30 min of your last race / workout
 - ✓ Best snacks have a 4:1 carbohydrate to protein ratio- refuels muscles best
 - ✓ Chocolate milk, English muffin w/ peanut butter, sandwich with meat & cheese, etc.
 - ✓ Eat a balanced meal within 1-2 hours of your last workout.
 - ✓ This prepares you for your next workout.
 - ✓ Food is fuel! Don't run on an empty tank!!

- **Things to avoid**
 - ✓ Energy drinks: mix of caffeine and sugar leads to poor performance
 - ✓ Fried foods: leads to stomach upset
 - ✓ Supplements: unregulated so you don't know what your getting, most not proven to work

For additional information go to www.HBRoadRunners.com