

## Sports Nutrition for Marathon Runners

### Plan and Prepare

- In months and weeks leading up to the event, get basic nutrition right
- Train both physically and nutritionally
- Focus on:
  - Hydration – Pee test
  - Base all meals and snacks around low GI carbohydrate (rice, potatoes, oats etc)
  - Consume high quality protein with every meal
  - **Don't forget to include** healthy fats (olive oil, oily fish, nuts etc)
  - Fruit and Vegetables – 6-8 portions a day

### Days Pre-Event

- Ensure fuel stores (muscle glycogen) are full by increasing carb intake
- This does not mean overeating! Focus on low GI carb rich meals and reduce intake of other macronutrients (eg fats)
- Eat your last large meal at lunchtime the day before the event and have a lighter meal in the evening (especially if you suffer from gastrointestinal (GI) problems)
- Ensure optimal hydration

### Pre-Event Breakfast

- Practice pre-event breakfast on long training runs
- Eat breakfast 3-4hr before the event – Ideally 80-100g carbohydrate (eg 100g porridge oats with 250-350mL semi-skimmed milk)
- Sip water after breakfast and in hours leading up to event – little and often to **maintain hydration (but don't overdo it, practice)**
- In 30mins before the start, optional high GI carbohydrate gel or snack (with water) – work out what works best for you in training

### During the Event – Carbohydrate

- Aim for 30-60g carbohydrate per hour
- Practice what works for you
- If you are aiming for 3hr, consume towards higher end of range; if you are aiming for 5hr, focus on lower end of range
- Sources of carbohydrate
  - Carbohydrate gel: approx 22g (need to be taken with water)
  - Energy bar: 20-40g
  - 4 jelly babies: 20g
  - Banana: 24-30g
- **Don't try anything new on race day!**

### During Event – Fluid

- Aim is to match fluid loss with fluid intake
- Little and often
- Practice during training

- Check environmental conditions and adjust fluid intake accordingly

#### Other Considerations

- Check the course – Where are the food/water stations, what will be on offer?
- Will you take your own foods?
- GI problems – Avoid high fat and fibre foods the day before the event and at pre-event breakfast
- **Don't forget recovery** – After training and after the event! (Protein and carbohydrate)

Information provided is in general terms – sports nutrition needs to be personalised. What works for one person may not work for another. ***Don't try anything new on race day!***

For more information about how Sports Nutrition can help you with your marathon or other sporting goal, contact Debbie Coughlin:

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