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Western People

Women's


Mini Marathon




Nutrition Hints & Tips



**“Nutrition
is simple,
but not
easy”**



Nutrition for runners can be confusing, especially with the proliferation of various diets from Paleo to vegan. These nutrition tips for runners will make optimizing your nutrition easier without being restrictive



Whether you are running for health, weight loss or management, or training for your next PR, nutrition is just as important as the miles you run.



“Adjust for Your Daily Training”

A 2-hour long run, 60-minute speed workout, and 30-minute easy run are all different workouts – so logically they each have different nutritional demands. Runners can easily get into a routine with both food and workouts, so it’s important to take extra effort to be sure you are varying your diet as you vary your workouts.

Your daily caloric needs vary based on your activity, along with your macronutrient requirements. The number of carbohydrates should be adjusted based on your level of activity. Carbs serve as the primary energy source for running, especially if you are doing a long run or a fast-paced run – so the more you run, the more carbohydrates you burned.

“Don’t skimp on Protein”



You may get energy during a run from carbohydrates and fat, but that doesn't mean you should neglect protein in your diet. Protein is not just for bodybuilders; a study published in PLOS ONE concluded that endurance athletes need to eat more protein than previously recommended. The researchers suggested 0.7 - 0.8 grams of protein per pound of body weight (1.6-1.8 grams per kilogram of body weight)



Protein plays a vital role in the repair of muscles after a hard workout – including after a run. Protein also is essential for the health of bones, ligaments, and tendons, as a protein in the bones and joints (collagen) is broken down during endurance exercise. Without enough protein, your body cannot repair and support itself – which means you will be at higher risk for injury and not see the full adaptations from your workouts.

“Don’t skimp on Protein”



Ideally, you want to spread out your protein intake throughout the day. Research indicates that 30 grams of protein are the maximum amount that can be synthesized in a single sitting. Instead of eating a majority of your protein at a single meal, aim to eat about 20-30 grams at each meal and 10-20 grams at your snacks.



The quality of protein matters. Reach for minimally processed sources of plant-based and/or animal protein such as nuts, Greek yogurt, legumes, eggs, lean meat, and seeds. If you choose protein powders, opt for natural ones with minimal ingredients such as whey and no added sugars.



“Focus on Diet Quality, Not Just Macros”

Not all carbohydrates are created equal – and the same applies to fats and proteins as well. Complex carbohydrates (whole grains, fruit, vegetables), healthy fats (nuts, seeds, olive oil, avocado), and lean protein (chicken breast, lean beef, legumes, eggs, Greek yogurt) all offer a wide variety of essential vitamins and minerals.

Simple carbohydrates, saturated fats, and fattier cuts of meat do not provide as many valuable nutrients and produce negative effects on the body, such as spiked insulin levels, increased risk of heart disease, and a generally sluggish and fatigued feeling. Even if they contain the same amount of carbs, there’s a huge difference between eating a bowl of oatmeal and eating a donut.

“Focus on Diet Quality, Not Just Macros”



Pick high-quality foods from natural sources such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, lean meats, legumes, and dairy. You will feel more satisfied with these foods and less likely to overeat, which will help manage healthy body composition. These foods will also energize you so that you improve in your training and don't hit a wall on your runs.

“Eat the Rainbow”



Colourful fruits, vegetables, and spices aren't just pretty to look at on a plate. The vibrant hues of seasonal produce indicate a powerful nutritional profile. Runners need more vitamins and minerals than the average person, especially nutrients such as iron, vitamin D, calcium, potassium, and magnesium. The more colourful the vegetable and the more variety of produce that you eat, the more of these essential nutrients you get.



Colourful foods such as blueberries, tart cherries, and turmeric also supply more antioxidants. Running places a large amount of stress on the body, especially if you are doing speedwork or long runs to prepare for an upcoming race. Antioxidant-rich foods can naturally combat training stress and help you recover quicker from your last workout better than any store-bought supplement.

“Time your Nutrition around Your Workouts”



Nutrition is not simply about what you eat – when you eat has an impact on your running as well. You can maximize your training and nutrition by timing some of your meals and snacks around your runs.



Eating before a workout will provide you with energy to run as far or as fast as you need to, especially if you will be running for longer than 30 minutes. opt for a small, easily carb-based digestible snack 1-2 hours before your run. Banana, dried fruit such as raisins, and toast are all good options for a pre-run snack. Protein can be difficult to digest before a run, so save that for after your workout.

“Time your Nutrition around Your Workouts”



Your body needs carbohydrates after a run to replenish glycogen stores (how your body stores carbs for energy) and protein to begin muscle repair. In the hour after exercise, your body is primed to synthesize carbs and protein, so aim to eat at least a small snack, if not a meal, during this key window

If you are running for longer than 90 minutes, you will need to eat during the run as well. Your body can only store enough carbs for approximately 2 hours of running and burning through all of your glycogen stores can suppress your post-run recovery and immune system. You can choose sports nutrition products such as gels or chews, or you can eat easily digestible whole foods such as dried fruit, applesauce, or boiled potatoes.