

UW Medicine

SPORTS, SPINE &
ORTHOPEDIC HEALTH

WHAT CAN NUTRITION DO FOR YOU NOW? A Nutrition Primer for the Day Before the Big Race...

Night before the race:

- 1) Choose higher carbohydrate foods. Typically, endurance athletes choose pasta but this could also include rice, potatoes, breads...OK to include moderate, low-fat protein.
- 2) Avoid taking on the challenge of all-you-can eat pasta party
- 3) Drink plenty of fluids (stick with non-caffeinated, non-alcoholic beverages!)
- 4) If you tend to have a sensitive GI tract, avoid salads

Morning of the race:

- 1) Choose something that you've had a chance to test out during your training and you know that you'll be able to tolerate while running/walking
- 2) As a rule, stick to lower fat, higher carbohydrate foods... but watch those foods high in fiber (For me, this means a Power Bar, toast, or banana vs. the Grand Slam breakfast at Denny's)
- 3) Hydrate:
 - a. 8-16oz about 2 hours before the race.
 - b. 4-8 oz. immediately before the start
 - c. (Some people may be sensitive to the sugar in sports and drinking them right before the race may leave them feeling hypoglycemic at the start. Unless you've tried drinking sports drinks before your training sessions, it may be best to stick to water at this point)

During the race:

- 1) Hydrate:
 - a. Drink 4-8 oz every 15-20 minutes
 - b. DO include sports drinks as part of your hydrating regime. You may want to dilute them by grabbing 1 cup of sports drink and 1 cup of water at each water station.
- 2) Carbohydrates: Try to consume 100-300 calories/hour (or 60-90g carbohydrate/hour), i.e., 1 packet of PowerGel or GU/hour or 4-6 cups Gatorade/hour (or a combination of gels and sports drink)
- 3) Watch out for Gels and drinks that you've not tried before! If possible, it's best to stick with what you know!

After the race:

- 1) Consume carbohydrates within the first 20 minutes after the race (ie, fruits, juices, bagels, yogurt)
- 2) As little as 6g protein consumed within 30 minutes of finishing will help stimulate muscle repair and synthesis (This is equivalent to the amount of protein in a carton of yogurt or a sports bar)
- 3) Hydrate: You will need to drink 2 cups fluid/pound body weight that you lost during the event. It may take as long as 24-48 hours for you to rehydrate completely. Choose high carbohydrate drinks such as juices and sports drinks to help replenish your glycogen stores and electrolytes at the same time.
- 4) Treat yourself to a NICE meal after you've had a chance to shower up and rest! Include plenty of complex carbs as well as some protein!

*Authored by UW Medicine Sports Medicine Physicians
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