

Nutrition for Distance Running

What role does Nutrition play?

“Good nutrition won’t make a champion, but poor nutrition may prevent you from becoming one”

Competition Nutrition

3-days before: Carbo-loading: 10g/kg/day CHO – Rice, potatoes, pasta, bread etc. Taper exercise and avoid Alcohol.

Pre-Race: • Eat what makes you feel good! – Preferably lots of Low GI Carbs e.g. Porridge, Spaghetti, Yoghurt, Most Vegetables, Pineapple Juice.

• Don’t leave it too late - ideally **3-4 hours** before.

• Avoid eating **<1-h** before – Risk of rebound hypoglycaemia & stomach cramps.

During the Race: • Aim to replace the water you’ve lost.

• Top-up blood glucose levels – Sports Drink, Banana. Aim for 30-60gCHO/hour.

• Also replace electrolytes – Hence why sports drinks are better than water!

• “Little & Often”

Post-Race: • What you eat is not so important; the key is to ensure you eat something!

• Eat within the “Golden Hour”.

• Ideally eat a meal that will provide a good balance of Carbohydrate, Protein & Fat. –

Replace what you have lost & promote adaptation – Curry with Rice or Pasta meal!!

• Drink 1.5 x what you’ve lost e.g. Lost 1L = Drink 1.5L. – **Avoid Alcohol!** – Dehydration.

Other considerations:

1. Hydration (or more appropriately – Dehydration) – Avoid alcohol if possible but certainly in the 2-3 days leading up to a race or training. Try to drink 1 pint of water 3-4 hours before the race to ensure you are adequately hydrated.

2. Supplements: • No supplement can substitute for a healthy, well balanced diet.

• Main benefit is convenience e.g. During the Race, Tiredness, Suppressed Appetite.

• Some supplements are more advantageous than others e.g. Drinks vs. Gels.

3. Weather: If it is hot you will sweat more and become dehydrated quicker – Drink More!

4. Water Stations – Familiarise yourself with where they are. Use family or friends to give you your drinks, food etc.

Golden Rule: If you want to try anything new, do it in training first before you try it in the race.