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# NUTRITION & WELLNESS GUIDE

## NUTRITION

Running is a sport that requires special nutrition. Performance, endurance, and recovery means not only concentrating on what you eat but when you eat.

**Healthy Eating:** Once you start running, your body needs extra fuel for those miles. You burn an average 100 calories for each mile run.

### A QUICK GUIDE TO WHAT YOU SHOULD EAT AS A NEW RUNNER:



**Complex carbohydrates** provide slow and steady fuel. These include whole grains, whole bread, unrefined pasta, vegetables, and potatoes.



**Glucose drinks** consumed in the first 15 minutes after your run will be best absorbed by muscles.



**Protein** is essential for tendon and muscle repair, as well as regulating hormones. The more you run and the further distance you cover, the more repair work your muscles need. A tip to remember is that if you are running a great distance you will need up to 1.5 grams of protein for every kilogram that you weigh. Aim for high quality and preferably lean protein, such as chicken, tofu, eggs, nuts, or fish.



**Monounsaturated fats** such as olive oil, flaxseed oil, canola oil, and avocados are the healthiest fats to consume as they decrease risk in heart disease and strokes.



**Water** consumption is essential for everyone, but even more so runners. A good rule of thumb is to aim for at least two litres, or eight cups, per day. Herbal teas, sports drinks, and fruit juices can count as fluids, but avoid caffeine, alcohol, and too much sugar.



**Balanced meals** for runners should comprise roughly 20% fats, 60% complex carbohydrates, and 20% proteins. Try to keep your diet as colourful as possible by eating plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. Fruit smoothies are also an excellent and quick source of nutrition.



### The right kind of snack is a good thing.

Once you start running on a regular basis you will notice that your base metabolism is faster, which means you are burning more calories. This is great news for those who want to shed a few pounds. Those who don't need to lose any weight will need to eat a little extra; nutritional snacks such as fresh fruit, vegetables, whole grain sandwiches, smoothies, nuts, eggs, yogurts, and protein or health-food bars can all help to alleviate the dreaded energy slump.



**Vitamins and minerals** will play an important factor in your running performance and endurance. Ideally, these should come from a healthy diet of fresh and whole foods. Bottled supplements should only ever be considered as an extra, not a necessity.



### Drink your meal.

Protein and sports drinks can be useful ways to stock up on fuel before a run, especially on early mornings when running before breakfast. Drinking meals is also easier on a runner's digestion than a big meal right before a run around the block.



### Planning:

Time your meals right for optimum running performance. The ideal formula is to eat a meal rich in complex carbohydrates 2 to 3 hours prior to your run.



## YOUR FAQs ANSWERED

### WHAT SHOULD I EAT FOR DINNER THE NIGHT BEFORE A MORNING RUN WORKOUT?

Runners should eat a well-balanced meal with plenty of carbohydrates and a moderate amount of lean protein.

For example:

- Chicken or lean meat over pasta
- Beef and vegetable stir fry over noodles or rice
- Bean and vegetable soup with whole-grain bread and skimmed milk
- Fish, vegetables and brown rice

### WHAT SHOULD I EAT BEFORE A RUN?

Food choices and tolerance levels vary according to the individual. Below are some guidelines:

#### **If eating 2+ hours before running, try:**

- Low-fat yogurt with low-fat granola and raisins
- Bagel with peanut butter and honey
- Ready-to-eat cold cereal with low-fat flavoured soymilk
- Oatmeal with 1% milk and a piece of fruit

#### **If running first thing in the morning:**

- Have a sports drink, diluted fruit juice, or water and an energy gel.

### SHOULD I EAT A GEL OR ENERGY BAR DURING TRAINING?

If moderate to intense exercise lasts longer than 90 minutes, it is recommended to take in carbohydrates to keep muscles adequately fueled.

### FEELING TIRED DURING WORKOUTS? YOU MAY BE DEHYDRATED.

If you are feeling tired during your workout one reason could be that you are dehydrated. Make sure you drink water before and after your workout and aim to drink 2-3 litres per day.

### DO I NEED TO EAT OR DRINK FOR RECOVERY AFTER A RUN?

The body is primed to replenish glucose stores in the 30 minutes following a workout, but, if a second workout is not planned for the day, then this window of opportunity is not crucial. As long as a healthy meal or snack is eaten within two hours of exercise, followed by a regular pattern of meals and snacks for the remainder of the day, the body should be refueled adequately.

Re-hydration with water will promote better recovery after run sessions. Drink water during stretching and on the way home.

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