

AN EASY TO FOLLOW NUTRITION PLAN FOR DISTANCE RUNNERS

(See also “The Feed Zone Cookbook: Fast and Flavorful Food for Athletes”)

EATING HEALTHY – Great Foods for Distance Runners!

1. Lean meat like turkey, beef, chicken, fish (lots of protein)
2. Almonds and nuts
3. Beans and legumes
4. Vegetables: Spinach and green vegetables especially. Eat lots of different colors of vegetables
5. Dairy including milk, yogurt, cheese
6. Oatmeal
7. Eggs
8. Peanut butter
9. Olive oil
10. Whole grain bread, cereal, pasta, etc.
11. Fruit: Especially berries including blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, raspberries

KEEP IN MODERATION OR ELIMINATE THE FOLLOWING

1. Refined white sugar
2. Bleached white flour
3. High fructose corn syrup
4. Sugary drinks like soda pop
5. Fast Food

EATING SUGGESTIONS

1. Eat when you are hungry. This is your body telling you that it needs fuel to run
2. Eat five to six small to medium meals each day
3. Eat every 2 to 3 hours
4. Eat breakfast and lunch
5. Eat a nutritious snack before and after practice and races
6. Drink lots of water, at least 96-128 oz a day or more (pee almost clear)
7. Stay away from unhealthy school lunch choices (nachos, pizza, cookies, etc.)

BREAKFAST SUGGESTIONS (most important meal of the day)

1. Oatmeal
2. Whole wheat toast, muffins, or bagels
3. Whole grain cereal with minimum sugar content
4. Bananas
5. All types of berries
6. Melon – all types

7. Eggs
8. Fat free or low fat milk
9. Yogurt
10. Juice
11. Peanut butter
12. Green tea
13. Smoothies
14. Whole grain pancakes with pure maple syrup
15. Use real butter instead of margarine
16. Honey on toast, muffins, or bagels
17. Eat bacon or sausage!

LUNCH SUGGESTIONS (never skip, always plan ahead)

1. Turkey sandwich on whole wheat
2. Sub sandwich on whole wheat
3. Peanut butter sandwich on whole wheat
4. Tuna on whole wheat
5. Spinach salad with chicken
6. Lean beef or ham on whole wheat
7. Milk

DINNER SUGGESTIONS

1. Eat what your parents cook for you. Try to limit the sugar foods and maximize the good foods listed above.
2. Try this Cookbook: *The Feed Zone: Fast and Flavorful Food for Athletes* (Amazon)

SNACKS

1. Almonds, nuts, smoothie, peanut butter sandwich, almond butter sandwich, yogurt, cheese, whole grain crackers, granola bars, whole grain bagels, subs, fruit, berries, trail mix, etc. Eat a snack between breakfast/lunch, between lunch/practice, and after practice if you will not eat dinner within 60 minutes.

POST RUN/RACE NUTRITION – It takes 24 to 36 hours to replace muscle energy (glycogen) after a hard workout or race. To reduce this recovery time and reload the muscles eat within 30 minutes after running or a race.

1. Drink lots of water
2. Chocolate milk is a great recovery drink
3. Granola bars
4. Bagels with peanut or almond butter, peanut butter sandwich
5. subs
6. burritos
7. fruit

8. Smoothies
9. Trail mix
10. Crackers and cheese
11. Nutrition drink

RACE DAY NUTRITION

1. Eat normal, especially breakfast.
2. Eat Snacks
3. Eat a normal lunch
4. Pre-event meal should be something like pasta, yogurt, turkey sandwich, and other easy to digest foods including liquids
5. Closer to the event eat less but liquids are good. Find out what works for you and time your meals properly. For most people this means eating your last meal 2-4 hours before a competition.
6. Plan out your meals at least 24 hours in advance.

HYDRATION

1. Drink at least 96-128 oz of water a day. Drink 3 to 4 32 oz bottles spaced throughout the day.
2. Spread hydration out all day long from the time you wake up to the time you go to bed.
3. Water is by far the best to hydrate
4. Sports Drinks are okay in moderation, but should be used post-run to replace electrolytes.
5. Energy drinks and soda have far too much sugar and/or caffeine and won't hydrate.
6. A simple way to see if you are hydrated is when you are peeing mostly clear.

SLEEP:

1. Your body recovers and rebuilds muscle when you sleep.
2. Develop healthy consistent sleeping patterns.
3. At least 8 hours a night. 9 to 10 is better.
4. Try and go to bed, and get up, at the same time everyday

SUPPLEMENTS:

1. Supplements should only "supplement proper nutrition" they don't replace proper nutrition and eating habits.
2. Multivitamins are okay, but won't replace nutritional needs from healthy foods
3. Whey Protein can be helpful if you are not eating a lot of lean meat, but should never replace protein from meat.
4. Liquid Iron (especially for girls) can help prevent anemia.