

PERFORMANCE NUTRITION: CROSS COUNTRY / RUNNING

THE PERFORMANCE INSTITUTE, INC.

Fuel for Running

Bodyweight and Running

Bodyweight is an issue for runners. A lighter bodyweight is advantageous since greater effort is required to carry heavier loads around and that can affect speed. However, there is a fine line between controlling excess bodyweight to run faster, and maintaining a health- and performance-promoting bodyweight.

Pitfalls of Consuming Inadequate Calories

- Fatigue
- Slow recovery from training
- Poor performance
- Nagging injuries
- Frequent upper respiratory illness
- Stress fractures
- Increased susceptibility to illnesses
- Burnout

Type of Fuel

- Carbohydrate is the fuel that allows the runner to run at a high level
- Carbohydrate is stored in the body (as *glycogen*) in limited amounts therefore, needs to be replaced by eating the right foods
- Carbohydrate needs increase with intensity of training
- Carbohydrate should be 55% of the diet



Calculating Your Needs:

Minimum Calories (kcal):

Bodyweight (lbs) x 10 kcal

Add Activity Calories (kcal)

Bodyweight (lbs) x .075 kcal x minutes running

NOTE:

These are approximations—everyone is different, but the runner should not fall below these numbers.

Also note that this calculation does not take into account other activities—such as biking to class, lifting weights etc. that also require fuel (kcal) to complete

Fuel Mistakes of Runners

- Too few calories for training
- Too few calories for recovery
- Incorrect type of food

Carbohydrate Needs:

- Moderate Training: 2.5 - 3.5g/lb bodyweight/day
- Intense Training: 3.5-5.5g/lb bodyweight/day
- Pre-exercise snack: 0.5g/lb bodyweight 30-60 mins before (fruit/easily digested)

High Carbohydrate Food Choices

Breakfast: Cereal, pancakes, waffles, toast, bagel, oatmeal, grits, orange juice, fruit

Lunch: Low fat sandwiches made with bread or rolls. Choose turkey, ham or roast beef. Pasta with low-fat topping/sauce. Salads, fruit.

Dinner: Potatoes, pasta, rice. Vegetables, salad, fruit. Low fat frozen yogurt. (Choose lean meat for protein-turkey, chicken, pork or fish).

Snacks: Pretzels, fruit, yogurt, energy bars, cereal, Gatorade

Hydration

Sweat losses can be great during training and racing. Failure to maintain hydration or replace these losses, will affect performance, and may negatively impact a runner's health. Thirst is not a good indicator of fluid needs, therefore runners must drink on a schedule.

Recovery

- Recovery strategies are important to help repair your body after training / racing, and to ready your body for the next race or training session.
- The 20 minutes after completion of training / racing is a critical period for recovery.
- Consume a high carbohydrate snack or drink (a small amount of protein may be included if preferred).
- Use recovery drinks such as Gatorade. Energy bars, fruit, and yogurt can be useful with water.
- Consume a high carbohydrate post-game meal with lean protein and limit the fried foods.
- Drink water and other fluids (not sodas) to replace that lost during your activity.
- Your urine should be colorless if you are adequately hydrated.

