

“MARATHON NUTRITION”

Diet Preparation

- A balanced diet that is high in carbohydrate and low in fat, and provides foods from all essential food groups ensures that you have an adequate supply of all nutrients.
- Make sure that you eat breakfast and if running early in morning and can't stomach a meal, try a fruit smoothie drink to make sure that you are not training on empty.
- Make sure you eat a carbohydrate rich snack containing some protein within 30 minutes following training to help the body refuel, and help muscle repair and regeneration. If you do not refuel adequately on a regular basis, this will cause reduction in your carbohydrate stores, making training more difficult.

Marathon Preparation

- Hydrate well the week before the marathon, water is ideal. This is especially important during the carbohydrate loading period as research has shown that carbohydrates convert to glycogen more effectively when accompanied with the consumption of water.
- If travelling by plane carry bottled water with you as flying at high altitudes causes dehydration.
- Start carbohydrate loading three days prior to the marathon. So, continue with your high carbohydrate training diet (contain 5-6g carbohydrate per kg of body weight). Then increase carbohydrate intake slightly to 8-10g/kg body weight in the 3 days before the race.

The Night before the Marathon

- Don't overeat late the night before as this will make it harder to fall asleep.
- Eat carbohydrate products that you have tried and tested during your training period.
- Pasta sauces should be kept simple and avoid eating lots of salad items and vegetables (roughage) as these may prove to be troublesome on race day, possibly causing digestive problems.
- Stick to water during the evening meal. Coffee and tea contain caffeine and may possibly disrupt your sleep patterns. Caffeine and alcoholic beverages are also diuretics, which contribute to dehydration.

Pre-race meal

- On the morning of the marathon enjoy a light meal allowing three to four hours for it to digest.
- You may find it difficult to eat because of nerves; in which case try using a liquid meal such as fruit smoothie, or fruit yogurt drink.
- As an ideal the pre-marathon meal should contain about 200-300g of carbohydrate and should be low in fibre, so that it does not cause a stomach upset. It is important to practice the pre-marathon breakfast during training to find out what works best for you.
- Take a snack, or drink in the hour before the marathon for an extra boost of energy to help delay fatigue; try dried fruit, low fat fruit yogurt, cereal or energy bar or a sports drink.
- Drinking 400-600mls of fluid, two hours before the race, this enables you to hydrate and also find time for a visit to the lavatory. Then top up with 200-250mls of fluid 15-20 minutes before the race starts.

During the Marathon

- During the race start topping up carbohydrate levels to ensure you don't run out. Start after about 30 minutes into the race, aim for about 30-60g carbohydrate per hour and continue at regular intervals. Try energy bars, gels, bananas, dried fruit-bars or an isotonic sports drink. But do not take anything on board in the race you haven't already tried in training.
- Start to replace fluids early into exercise, don't wait to become thirsty. Drink small amounts frequently to avoid gastric disturbance. Start replacing fluids within the first 30 minutes of exercise, aim for 150-350 mls of fluid every 15-20 minutes during exercise.
- An isotonic sports drink is an ideal way to refuel and rehydrate. Start practicing drinking during training to help reduce stomach upsets during the race.

Ideas for carbohydrate during the race

Sports drink

- 1 x energy gel
- 2 x cereal bars
- 2 x pieces of fruit
- 2 x handfuls dried fruit

Post Marathon

- Remember to eat within the hour to make sure that your body has the fuel to start to recover.
- Eat a carbohydrate snack with some protein i.e. fruit yogurt and sandwich, banana and yogurt drink, sandwich.
- Start replacing lost fluids by drinking until urine appears pale in colour. Eat a high carbohydrate meal following the marathon and continue to eat carbohydrate rich meals for the next week to replenish stores.

Checklist

- Ensure that your training diet is high in carbohydrate
- Eat a high carbohydrate snack with some protein within first 30 minutes after training
- Practice drinking and eating during long runs and practice your pre-race breakfast
- Eat carbohydrate rich meals 3 days prior to the race
- Eat pre-race breakfast 2-3 hours before the marathon
- Take pre-race snack within 1 hour before the marathon
- Replace fluids early in the marathon, 150-350mls every 15-20 minutes (use a sports drink)
- Take 30-60g carbohydrate every hour, start 30 minutes into race
- Recovery strategy – remember to eat and drink straight after race, make sure you have prepared for this

If you have any specific questions about Marathon training please contact us on **0870 2000 878** or reception@puresportsmed.com

Clinics at:

Point West, 116 Cromwell Road
Kensington, London.

The Lodge, Parkside Hospital
53 Parkside, Wimbledon, London.