

# Nutrition

## Tips from Simon Burden, Active Interest

Fine tuning what you eat and drink will give you the fuel to ensure you complete the challenge.

### Carbohydrates

In the weeks leading up to the event you should start to increase the amount of complex carbohydrates you eat, with around 60% of your daily calories coming from carbohydrates including:

- Oats
- Wholemeal pasta
- Wholemeal bread
- Potatoes
- Fruit
- Vegetables

Your carbohydrates should ideally be complex (unrefined) which will release energy more slowly. Carbohydrate is the fuel the body uses for endurance activity.

### Protein and fats

This intake of carbohydrates should be supplemented with protein and essential fats, to ensure that your muscles are repairing and recovering from training, including:

- Chicken
- Eggs
- Beans
- Pulses
- Mackerel
- Tuna
- Salmon
- Olive Oil

### 5 a day

A colourful intake of at least 5 servings of fruit and vegetables a day is essential as endurance exercise places the immune system under increased stress, meaning the vitamins and minerals

from fruit and vegetables are required to boost the immune system. Each colour has a different property so ensure your shopping basket is as colourful as possible.

You will need to be well fuelled before training and the event and should therefore experiment with what works best for you. Everyone reacts differently to food before exercise. However, the following principles should be followed, ensure you are well hydrated and have had a complex carbohydrate snack/meal 1 – 2 hours before the event. Depending on the duration and time of the event this could be porridge, a bagel, wholemeal toast and scrambled egg or pasta. You could supplement this by sipping a sports drink. However, be sure to experiment, find out what works best for you and be sure not to try something new on the day of the event.

## Water

Dehydration is a major cause of a decrease in sporting performance, it's therefore vital that you are well hydrated during training and the event itself.

As someone who is exercising regularly you should be looking to drink 2-3 litres of water a day. This should come from drinking water and eating foods with high water content such as most fruit and vegetables. Your urine should be a clear colour, if it is a darker yellow colour then you are dehydrated. Also during the event and training don't wait until you are thirsty as this is your body's way of telling you that it is already de-hydrated.

Be sure to have a hydration strategy for the event, ensuring you have enough liquid with you for the event. You may wish to take on board water and a sports drink, which will contain carbohydrate and will top up your carbohydrate stores. Carbohydrate gels, which are available from most running and cycling shops, can be taken in an easy to digest liquid form and are another effective way of boosting your carbohydrate stores. Be sure to wash down with Water.

## Post race

After the event be sure to rehydrate by sipping water and replacing lost energy with carbohydrate snacks and a meal within 1 hour.

**DISCLAIMER:** This advice is a guideline only, if you are uncertain about training, what to eat or drink or the effects of undertaking the event, you should seek the advice of a doctor.