

## Eating for a Marathon

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-Proper nutrition is a key element of a successful marathon. Endurance events come with unique nutrition challenges, and fuelling your body appropriately should be considered an important part of your training regime. Often, trial and error is involved in finding out what works for you in terms of what to eat and when to eat. **Use your long Sunday runs to experiment with what works best for you, and once you find that magic combination, don't change anything for race day.** That way there will be no surprises. There's nothing worse than searching for a porta-potty at mile 10 (and 15, and 18, and 20...) on race day (yes, this is from experience!).

-Follow [Canada's Food Guide](#) for "everyday" eating. This will provide a balance of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, and will also ensure you are getting all the vitamins and minerals you need for optimum exercise performance. Drink plenty of non-caffeinated, non-alcoholic fluids (water is best), as dehydration will negatively impact your performance.

### Before a long run

-For long Sunday runs (and for race day itself), you will need to be especially sure your body is properly fuelled. Fuel for your muscles comes from a combination of fat and carbohydrate (glucose). Carbohydrates are not stored well by the body so there is the potential to run out of glucose as an energy source during endurance events.

-Make sure you eat well in the days prior (follow Canada's Food Guide) to make sure your limited carbohydrate stores are as full as possible. On the day of your long run or race, have a good breakfast, focusing on carbohydrates (try for 1 g of carbohydrate per kg of body weight) with a little bit of protein. Go easy on the fat and fibre, as these can contribute to delayed stomach emptying, cramping, and gas. Research has shown that eating breakfast at least 2 hours prior to the run is best, but do whatever works for you. Don't forget to drink some water, 2 cups minimum.

-In the hour immediately prior to your run (or half hour if you can tolerate it), have some more easily digested carbohydrates; for example a gel, some sports drink, jelly beans, or Sharkies®. Also try to have another cup of fluid (if you have a sports drink, the fluid is included).

### During a long run (more than an hour)

-You will need to take in some carbohydrates during the run to make sure you don't run out of fuel. Take 30-60 g of carbohydrates per hour. 1 gel supplies about 25 g, sports drinks supply about 14 g per cup, 13 Sharkies® supply 42 g. Read the label of your favourite product.

-Make it a habit to drink on the run (every walk break). Estimated fluid losses during running in moderate weather (ie: Vancouver) are 1000-1500 mL per hour. It is very difficult to drink this much while running, but the closer you can match your losses, the better your performance will be.

### After a long run

-There is a "30 minute window" after exercise when your muscles are primed for recovery. If you can eat 50-100 g of carbohydrates in this window, along with 10-20 g of protein, this will aid in muscle recovery more than if you eat later. Also remember to drink plenty of water.

-Reward yourself for your effort, but remember that nutritious foods (again, follow Canada's Food Guide), combined with lots of water, are the most effective for recovery.

## Carbohydrate Content of Some Foods

<b>Food or Beverage</b>	<b>Grams of Carbohydrate (approx)</b>
1 cup skim milk	12
1 cup sports drink	14
1 medium apple	20
1 medium banana	25
1 cup orange juice	25
1 cup cooked oatmeal	26
2 slices bread	30
1 Snickers bar	35
3 Twizzlers	36
1 cup fruit punch	37
12 oz cola	38
1 cup cooked spaghetti	40
1 cup cooked white rice	42
Grande Starbucks Mocha with 2% milk and whipped cream	43
1 chocolate chip Clif Bar	44
1 cup raisin bran	47
10 pretzels	48
1 cinnamon raisin bagel	49
1 baked potato	50
1 cup fruit yogurt	50
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup raisins	57
1 cup granola	64

## Protein Content of Some Foods

<b>Food or Beverage</b>	<b>Grams of Protein (approx)</b>
1 tbsp peanut butter	4
1 oz almonds (about 23)	6
1 large egg	6
30 g (1 oz) of cheddar cheese	7
1 cup of skim milk	9
1 chocolate chip Clif Bar	10
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup tofu	10
1 cup fruit yogurt	9-11
1 cup cooked quinoa	11
Grande Starbucks Mocha with 2% milk and whipped cream	13
85 g can of tuna	16
1 cup cooked lentils	18
1 cup hummus	20
$\frac{1}{2}$ chicken breast	27