

Top Nutrition Tips for Before and During Your Marathon Effort

-By Liu Suiqian, Registered Dietitian of Beijing United Family Hospital

A marathon is an excessive endurance event that requires energy and fluid levels in the body to be replenished in the build up to and for the duration of the whole marathon event. Sufficient nutrition is essential for boosting muscle strength and metabolic level as well as avoiding excessive physiological damage.

Sufficient carbohydrate intake is important for glycogen reserves and fatigue delay. Although most regular runners are aware of this, those who lack experience can sometimes forget that a large amount of carbohydrates should be intensively consumed one to two days before the event. The proper way to do it is to eat high carbohydrate foods as well as drink sufficient fluids a couple of days before marathon.

Restricting caloric intake should always be avoided before the race. Insufficient calorie intake can cause more muscle loss rather than fat loss and can eventually cause an elevated body fat percentage.

Stable blood sugar levels and enough glycogen reserves are important to avoid a lower metabolic rate and a higher body fat percentage during the preparation stages. To achieve this purpose, a clever approach is to increase meal frequency. Enough fluid intake as well as small frequent meals such as three main meals plus an extra two or three healthy snacks is much more helpful.

On marathon day, a high carbohydrate diet is essential around 90 minutes before the starting gun goes off. As for fluids, 300 to 500 milliliters (ml) is recommended two hours prior to race as well as an extra 120 to 240ml taken five to ten minutes before running. To protect your muscles and replenish lost fuel, energy and fluids should always be supplemented throughout the whole marathon. A portion size of 25grams of a professional energy bars is advised to be consumed every 40 to 50 minutes and you need to sip 120 to 240ml of a sports drink every 15 to 20 minutes while you're running.

Follow this advice and you'll have a much more comfortable and enjoyable marathon experience!

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长跑者备战及赛中的营养重点

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马拉松属于超量耐力运动，运动前和运动中合理的营养、能量和液体补充，对于避免身体过度损耗、提高赛程中的肌肉力量、维持甚至提高代谢水平、保持良好竞技状态非常重要。

很多跑者都知道碳水化合物的足量摄入，对于长跑中糖原储备的意义。然而，没有经验的初次参赛者常常是赛前一两天集中进食大量碳水化合物，这其实是个误区。正确做法是：赛前数天就要开始频繁进食碳水化合物的摄入，且，一定要保证足量的热量摄入——这是任何赛前饮食可以发挥效能的重要基础。

赛前切忌为了降低体脂肪含量而采取低能量饮食，这样做，会导致去脂体重的丢失量大于体脂肪的减少量，以至体脂肪率不降反升。

赛前备战训练期间，三顿正餐+两到三次加餐的频繁进餐，而非间隔时间很长的传统一日三餐式低频率进餐，有助于避免代谢率降低和体脂肪率增加、帮助维持平稳的血糖和糖原储备。赛前一周内，为了糖原储备，还需要保证足量饮水。

比赛当日，应提前 90 分钟完成高碳水化合物膳食。在长跑比赛过程中，一定要及时进食以补充损耗、保护肌肉。由于跑步过程中血液集中在骨骼肌，肠胃消化力弱，所以要选择易食的专业运动营养能量棒、能量胶或饮料，每隔 40—50 分钟食用一次，一次食用量为 25 克左右，饮水要小口，不要等口渴才喝，赛前 2 小时提前补充 300~500 毫升液体；运动前 5~10 分钟，饮用 120~240 毫升液体；长跑过程中平均每 10-15 分钟饮用 120-240 毫升含钠的糖量为 6~7% 的含碳水化合物饮料。

以上信息可以给您带来一个轻松愉快的长跑经历！

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