

Welcome to the Half Marathon Tips

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Firstly and Importantly a Recommendation

It is recommended that any potential participant not currently involved in physical sporting activity, should undertake a medical examination before taking part in the Half Marathon.

“Food glorious food.....” Nutrition for a Half Marathon

I want you to think of your body as a car for a few seconds. If the car has no fuel it won't work/ move. Put in the fancy Petrol - your engine will work better. It's the same with food. Put in the good stuff and your body will work better. If your body is working better – you will get more out of your training and invariably you're Marathon.

The key 'fuel' your body is looking for in endurance running is Glycogen. Glycogen comes from Carbohydrates which are stored primarily in the muscles and also in the liver. Carbohydrates include rice, pasta's, potatoes, beans, bread, fruit, milk, juice & vegetables. The body's ability to store glycogen will have a direct impact on your marathon performance. Think of it like this: You train your body to run longer distances. As a direct consequence you will burn more energy than before. So consequently you have to train your body to store more energy. There is a direct link between your glycogen storage capacity and your endurance levels.

Let me give you an example first to make this point. I'm sure you have heard of the expression 'to carbo load'. Translated this means to take extra carbohydrates into the body normally a few days before the race. Now, if your body is not in the habit of storing these extra carbs it simply won't hold onto them as it doesn't suddenly have extra capacity to store them in your cells. It's a building process a training process for your body to take in the extra stores.

There are two types of carbohydrate – both break down into Glucose. There are Simple carbohydrates and Complex carbohydrates. Simple contain one or two sugar units – complex contain 10 – 1,000's.

- Simple Carbohydrates – Fruit, Juice, milk
- Complex Carbohydrates – vegetables, pasta, rice, cereals, breads

Having glycogen reserves in the body for endurance running can help you avoid what's known as 'hitting the wall'. The predominant reason for this happening is because people run out of energy or Glycogen.

Staying hydrated is another key discipline that runners need to stay on top of.

Tip - Weigh yourself when hydrated before exercise. Every 1kg decrease in weight = 1 litre loss of fluid.

Before: 400 – 600ml about 2 hours before.

During: 150 – 330ml every 15 – 20 mins. The more you sweat the more you need to drink.

After: Consume approx 1.5 times the fluid lost during exercise

Warning – don't increase your intake of water suddenly. Just like the Carbohydrates and your training – build it up slowly and deliberately.....

Eoin Ryan (Ultra Marathon Runner)