

Dam to Dam NUTRITION TIPS

Start in March and have a great DAM race June 3, 2017

As the temperatures become more friendly and as the days get longer, hydration should become a top priority in your daily routine. Although maintaining hydration is crucial all year long, warmer months present a bigger challenge to the hydration equation. Aim to consume half of your body weight in ounces of water every day. (Ex: a 150 pound person should consume at least 75 ounces of water every day.) On long workout days more water will be needed. Try adding NUUN hydration tablets to your bottle of water to ensure you maintain important electrolyte status. Never heard of NUUN? Ask me! Contact a dietitian to learn more about how to maintain optimal hydration levels in order to perform your best!

We have all heard it before: breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Set a goal to eat breakfast every day, even on days you hit the pavement early. It is beneficial to have some sort of fuel working in your system, otherwise like a car out of gas, you are running on fumes. Most runners will need to experiment with what works for them, and remember "breakfast" does not have to be big and elaborate. Maybe a banana, crackers with nut butter, a handful of trail mix, or 6-8 ounces of sports drink will do the trick. Eating breakfast helps to control cravings later in the day, so if weight loss is your goal, think of breakfast as your best friend.

Nutrition and performance are very closely related. On average you will burn about 100 calories per mile, depending on your size and intensity of training. For a 4 mile run you would burn about 400 calories. Remember to fuel your body with options like fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, and lean protein choices. Avoid using training as an excuse to eat anything and everything you want. I like to think of it as "What you put in = what you will get out" in relation to nutritional choices and performance. If you fuel with healthy choices you are more likely to be rewarded with optimal performances.

When you eat is just as important as what you eat. Recovery nutrition is extremely important for replenishing the energy you used during your training run or workout so that you are ready for your next workout. Set a goal to consume a snack or meal within 30 minutes of finishing exercise. Chocolate milk is a great recovery aide. Other ideas

include: peanut butter and jelly toast, greek yogurt and a piece of fruit, or string cheese and an apple. Plan ahead and have options available in your car or gym bag!

Longer training runs are the perfect opportunity to practice race day nutrition. Experiment with a breakfast that works for you 2-4 hours before you begin your run. Every person is different and will require a different race nutrition plan. If you plan to use race nutrition,

experiment with different sports nutrition products during your training runs as well. Honey Stinger, Clif, PowerBar, and Hammer Gel are just a few of the many options available. Consult a dietitian to help you plan the ideal nutrition plan in order to have your best race!

When putting in extra training miles, you may find your appetite increases. Make sure you are prepared when hunger strikes with healthy options such as fruit, cocoa roasted almonds, ALT bars (like Larabars, but with more protein) or Clif Kid Organic fruit ropes. Having healthy options available will reduce the chance of getting too hungry and making a bad choice.

When was the last time you had your iron levels checked? Iron deficiency is very common among runners, especially women. If you

have ever experienced a time when you often felt dizzy, easily fatigued on easy training runs (more so than normal), or have had more than normal amounts of leg cramps - you may be iron deficient. Iron deficiency can significantly impact athletic performance. Increase your intake of green leafy vegetables, like spinach and kale, and red meat (if you choose) to pump up your iron levels. Speak with a dietitian to learn more about how to get back to feeling good while training!

As race day approaches, keep in mind the importance of keeping your nutritional intake consistent and common. Now is not the time to try a bunch of new things regarding your diet - be confident in your training and your nutritional choices and you will be great!

Historically speaking, Dam to Dam race day has been a little on the humid side. Remember to make hydration a priority in this final week before race day. Don't leave it up to Friday afternoon to get it in. Hydrate early, hydrate often! Have a great race!!!

by Ellen (Ries) Davis, DAM nutrition expert and owner of Davis Sports Nutrition, LLC. 15 time state High School champion and 5th at Dam to Dam 2014 (pictured)

