

"FUEL FOR THE DUAL"

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It's not too late to get your sustenance sorted for the big day. Be it the marathon, the half marathon, the marathon relay or the mountain bike...it's going to be tough and you need to be prepared.

The 3 key components to nutrition success for this event are:

1. Knowledge
2. Planning & Organisation
3. Practise

... in this order

1. Knowledge

THE BASICS: *Training fuel*

My main motto for a sensible training diet is to eat regularly throughout the day, making sure that you consume enough nutrient dense carbohydrate and protein sources to ensure optimal vitamin and mineral intake. This includes eating from each of the four food groups (fruit + veg- 5 servings minimum, grains – 6 servings minimum, low fat dairy- 2 servings minimum and lean meats - include in lunch and dinner). Apart from these foods spread evenly over the day, stay well hydrated by consuming 8-10 glasses of fluid (slightly higher on very hot / humid days). Once you have consolidated this rhythm of eating so that it has become a habit, you can get more specific with timing meals around your training sessions.

THE SPECIFICS: *Fueling for the event*

Timing is everything.

In order to make sure you are not too hungry, too full, will run out of energy, feel bloated, need the loo or get the stitch while you're on THE DUAL, you need to train your food, and train your fluid to make sure you have the combination right! There are three important nutrition time-points in preparing nutritionally for this event:

1 Friday night (The night before):

DINNER: This meal should contain *carbohydrate* (pasta / rice/ potato / kumara / bread-based, *protein* (meat, fish, chicken, eggs, tofu) and *vegetables* (add some fat if you like, as long as you eat the whole meal) + *fluid* (water / juice). Try the recipe below (IN ADVANCE to see if you like it)

AFTER DINNER SNACK: Eat a carbohydrate-based snack to top up your muscle glycogen levels. Eg. [Fruit salad + yoghurt](#) / [ice-cream](#) OR [Apple crumble + yoghurt](#) / [custard or ice-cream \(+ water\)](#)

Chicken and Veggie-Topped Orzo (serves 2-3)

What's in it?

· 2 tsp olive oil · 1 clove garlic clove; minced · 500g skinless chicken breast; cut in cubes · 2-3 cups broccoli (or broccolini), capsicum and snowpeas- blanched (add other veg if you like) · 1 cup chicken broth · ¼ tsp salt · 1/8 tsp black pepper · 2 cups orzo (risoni) uncooked · 1 tblsp grated Parmesan cheese.

How to make it?

Cook orzo according to package directions. In a non-stick pan, heat oil; add garlic and sauté for 1 minute. Add chicken and cook, stirring quickly and frequently, until chicken is no longer pink (5 minutes). Add vegetables, broth, salt, and pepper and cook until chicken is tender and mixture is heated through (3-5 minutes). Serve over hot orzo and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

2... THE MORNING OF... (Saturday morning)

BREAKFAST:

Breakfast is a must and the quality of it determines just how important this meal will be in providing you with the fuel you need for the race. Combine carbs, protein + fluid in this meal. The amount you eat depends upon i. your appetite ii. what you have been consuming in training, and iii. What sits well in you stomach before a race. All of the following are good options. NOTE: Again it is crucial that you try these in training (food type and timing) and not go for something new on race day.

Cereal: Grain / oat based cereal OR porridge + low fat milk / yoghurt. Add chopped fresh or dried fruit. Glass fruit juice or low fat milk-based beverage

Toast: Wholegrain toast + peanut butter OR cheese + jam OR honey OR egg PLUS milk-based fruit smoothie (1 banana, ½ cup blueberries, 1 cup low-fat milk, ½ cup low fat natural yoghurt).

If you get nervous and don't feel like eating solid food, a smoothie option is a great idea.

SNACK:

You need to keep a snack handy on the ferry to munch on between breakfast and the start of the race. (This may be 2 -3 hours for some people). Good examples include:

Fruit (fresh or dried) · Muesli / cereal / breakfast / energy bars · Up & Go drink / Flavoured milk · Scroggin / trail mix · Tinned creamed rice · Water

Despite their being plenty food available on the day, you still need to know how much you need and what it is you like eating or drinking while you're running / biking.

3... THE DUAL ITSELF...

For each hour of your race, plan for the following:

- o 600-750ml fluid
- o About 50g carbs (depending on your size / intensity)

See combos below:

- 3 cups (750ml) sportsdrink = 50g carbs
- 600 - 750ml water + banana + gel = 55g carbs
- 750ml ½ strength sportsdrink /sportswater + 5-8 lollies = 50-75g carbs

This requires some planning if you have 4 hours of biking or running. For those who have limited carrying equipment, use the aid stations and factor in the amount of carbohydrate and fluid you will get from this food / fluid.

For a great high energy and delicious fuel-bar, try the recipe below:

Pistachio Fruit Bars* (makes 24 small bars, or 12 large ones)

What's in it?

· 3 cups dried fruit, coarsely chopped (papaya, pineapple, figs, apricot, cranberries, raisins, cherries) · 1 cup pistachio nuts · ¾ cup flour · ½ tsp mixed spice · 2 eggs, lightly beaten · 2 tblsp liquid honey · 100g Nestle cooking chocolate, melted.

How to make it?

Preheat oven to 180°C. Line a 27cm x 18cm baking tin with baking paper. Place the dried fruit and nuts in a bowl. Add sifted flour, mixed spice. Combine eggs, honey, melted chocolate. Add to the dry ingredients, mix well. Press evenly into baking tin. Bake in oven for 30 minutes /until firm to the touch. Cool. Cut into bars when cold. Store in an airtight container.

* Recipe from fitfood for winners (Millenium Institute of Sport & Health cookbook: pg 107)

2. Planning & Organisation

BIKERS: You will be on the 6am ferry ... for an 8am race start

- ✓ For you, breakfast is at 5ish (depending on where you live). Take a snack and fluid on the ferry.

MARATHON RUNNERS: You will be on the 7am ferry ... for an 8:30am race start

- ✓ For you, breakfast is at 6ish (depending on where you live). Take a snack and fluid on the ferry.

½ MARATHON RUNNERS: You will be on the 7:45am ferry ... for a 9:30am race start.

- ✓ For you, breakfast is at 6-6:30am (depending on where you live). Take a snack and fluid on the ferry.

Plan your day's food intake in advance. Pack your day's food the night before (or put the cold items in a special place in the fridge so you can just grab it in the morning).

YOU NEED:

1. Pre-race snack and fluid
2. Race food (Note: there will be food provided along the way- bananas, squeezies, lollies)- FACTOR THESE IN IF YOU WANT.
3. Race fluid (Note: there will be fluid provided along the way- water, Balance sportsdrink)- FACTOR THESE IN IF YOU WANT.
4. Fluid carrier (waterbottles / camelbaks / fuel belt)

3. Practise

Practise food and fluids to consume pre-exercise and during exercise at your training sessions. Work out which foods you are happy to eat and which fluids and how much fluid you will need. Eat and drink regularly to fuel your muscles throughout the session / event.

...by now you should be sorted...nutritionally, that is. What about recovery, you ask? I say relax and enjoy a kiwi sausage and a coke, and maybe even a beer (after lots of water of course...and then get back to your good eating habits). Good luck for the race and don't forget to look at the views from this great spot in the Hauraki Gulf.