

## **Basic Race Nutrition by Race Elements**

Nutrition is vital for mountain bike racing. If you don't consume the right foods and liquids during your training rides and races, then you put your self behind the eight ball.

### **Four types of fuel your body can use, Carbohydrates, Fats, Alcohol and Protein:**

These different substrates release energy at different rates. If you can imagine; **Carbohydrates** burn like fine kindling on a fire. They burn quickly and release plenty of energy.

**Fat** is like small logs, they burn slower and produce less energy.

**Protein** is like a big sized log, it burns very slow and does not produce much energy.

**Alcohol** is a Toxin. Your body will always try and burn it before any other fuel. This is not a winning fuel source as you get dehydrated, loss of coordination and receive a lovely hang over.

### **Finding the Balance**

It can be hard finding the balance of the right amount of carbs, fats and protein for your particular discipline of riding. There is a big difference between eating for and during 24hr racing, Olympic distance cross country, 4X and Down Hill.

A basic rule to use is the longer the race the more protein you will need. So if you are racing in Olympic distance cross country, 4X or Down Hill, then a higher carbohydrate nutrition plan will be needed. With the longer races, you will need to consume a larger amount of protein.

It's sometimes hard finding the balance that works for you, so experiment in training and find your ideal combination. It is also a good idea to consult a sports nutritionist to dial in your race day plans.

### **Solid and Fluid form of Carbohydrates and Protein:**

Now your body can ingest these substrates in either a fluid form or a solid form. The benefit of having a fluid form is that your body can easy absorb it, as it is already broken down from a solid into a liquid. It is also easier to consume while riding. The disadvantage of having a fluid form is that you miss out on the fiber as well as the natural goodness of unprocessed food.

Fluid form is recommended for a rider that is constantly on the bike. A solid form of a carbohydrate is recommended for a rider in a team where they have at least 40 minutes to eat and digest food before they ride again.

There are now a wide selection of specialised sports drinks, gels and bars out on the market that have differing amounts carbs and protein in each drink.

### **Pre event Nutrition:**

A balanced, healthy and tasty intake of food is required for optimum performance. Think of your food as a race car driver would of race fuel. It needs to be clean and of good quality.

Your nutrition leading into race day could be something like this:

- Enjoy 5-6 smaller meals per day , as it helps metabolism to become a fat burning machine.
- In every meal look for 1/3 processed foods e.g. *salami, white bread, white rice, pasta, doughnuts, pizza hut etc.*
- In every meal look for 2/3 unprocessed foods e.g. *fruit and vegetable, brown rice, fish, lean meat, whole meal bread/pasta.*
- Aim to drink 1 liter of water per 25kg of body per day.
- If you're slightly thirsty you are already dehydrated! Drink before your thirsty!

#### **Race Day Nutrition:**

- Don't try to eat any new or different foods. Go with what works for you.
- Try not to eat any big meals with in 2 hrs of the race starting. Your body will be focusing on the meal not on racing.
- Have a light snack 30 min before the race if stomach is relaxed e.g. bread and jam or fruit.
- While competing, you will need to snack on food to maintain your carbohydrate supply. Try to have small amounts food every 20 to 40 minutes.
- Hydration during the race, sip 150 – 200 ml - 10/15 min of exercise, ideal 12-15 deg. cold H2O or sports drink.

For more hints and tips on nutrition and training, drop us an email at [info@raceelements.com.au](mailto:info@raceelements.com.au)

Or call (07) 3857 6853

***Raceelements***