



## Healthy Nutrition & Hydration

The right nutrition and hydration are essential to train for and successfully complete a 5K. The tips below will help participants find what works for them. There is no one-size-fits-all regimen. Experiment through trial and error to see what works best for your body.

### **Nutrition**

- Before running, participants should eat primarily carbohydrates as these foods are quickly digested and therefore readily available to be used by the body.
- If you are exercising for less than an hour, snack on foods that are easily digestible, such as toast, English muffins, bananas, crackers or a granola bar.
- If you are exercising for longer than an hour, eat well the day before. Then, choose a pre-exercise snack with protein and fat, such as apples and nut butter or yogurt and granola. Limit high-fat sources of protein, such as hamburgers, fried food and cheese omelets, as they take longer to empty from the stomach.
- Allow adequate time for digestion before running. Recommended timeframes include:
  - Three to four hours if you have eaten a large or heavy meal.
  - Two to three hours for a small or light meal.
  - One to two hours for a blended or liquid meal.
  - Less than an hour for a snack.
- If you know that you can't eat before you run, make sure to eat well the night before.
- After exercising, make sure to eat as soon as tolerable after your workout. Muscles break down during workouts and should be repaired with food. Eating within 20-30 minutes after exercise is the best timeframe to nourish, repair and rebuild muscles. Refuel with carbohydrates and protein, as they repair muscle and prevent soreness.
- If you are not hungry after exercising, you don't have to consume a large amount of food. A small snack, like a protein drink, fresh or dried fruit, dry cereal or a granola bar, will make a difference to your muscles.

### **Hydration**

- More than 70% of your body is water, therefore it is important to hydrate when participating in any exercise program.
- Make sure to drink on a schedule. If you're thirsty, you are already under-hydrated.
- To see how much water you lost during exercise, you can monitor your weight before and after activity. For each pound lost, you should rehydrate with two to three cups of water.
- A urine test can be used to check on your hydration. If your urine is lighter, has a large volume and little to no odor, then you are hydrated. If it is dark yellow and has small volume and a strong odor, then you are under-hydrated.

### **Sports Drinks Information**

- It is recommended that triathletes and marathon runners use sports drinks.
- Sports drinks contain added sodium and potassium and are useful if you are sweating profusely.
- However, if you are exercising for less than an hour, sports drinks may not be useful for you. It is recommended that you choose water instead.



### **What to Drink**

- Water is always best. It is recommended that you chose plain, unflavored water or sparkling seltzer.
- 100% fruit juice can also rehydrate the body. This can be diluted with water, ice, or sparkling or seltzer water.
- Non-fat, low-fat or non-dairy milk can also help to repair muscles.

### **Hydration Tips**

- During a race, drink the water offered at each water station. If you cannot drink the whole cup, make sure to drink at least five sips.
- During your training runs, carry bottles of fluid with you. This can be done with items such as a hydration belt.

### **Additional Support**

- If you are a Quad employee, spouse or dependent on the health plan and would like additional support in your physical activity goals, free health coaching is available! Call 1-888-417-1001 today to set-up an appointment!

Questions? Contact [quadwellness@quadmedical.com](mailto:quadwellness@quadmedical.com)