

BC Bike Race Nutrition

One of the easiest places to make gains is in the nutrition department. It doesn't have to be a super complicated diet adjustment; you just have to understand your existing eating habits, where they come from and how to change them.

Start by getting yourself into the right mindset: "I want to be a better me, a new me, and a more diet smart me."

Remember, you are what you eat, and what you eat translates into your performance.

Do you realize that most of us, at 25-55, still eat like a 15 or 17 year-old?! And what's wrong with that, you ask? Well, those portions that fueled our growing teenaged bodies simply aren't what we need any more. We're not growing and we generally live an office life, a sedentary life or a physically periodized existence. Make allowances for this new realization and move to shrink your general intake of food.

Basic Diet Improvements

- 1) *Eat a smaller, more protein oriented breakfast.* This starts the day with a smaller stomach and recognizes that we don't need as much food. Be especially careful of cereal - extra carbs on a sedentary diet aren't necessary.
- 2) *Understand that everything is carbohydrate oriented, which equals large calories.* Move towards a vegetable rich diet, with protein in each meal, and at a volume that respects when you are active and sedate. Monday we are recovering from the weekend activity, so we may be hungrier. Tuesday should be a slowing down of diet and metabolism. Wednesday and Thursday the same, but by Friday we are building for the weekend so an increased calorie intake is ok. Never starve yourself during times of increased activity. It is important to eat more before, during and after bouts of endurance, but don't carry that philosophy into your regular diet. Think: "Physically periodized existence".
- 3) *Evening meals are truly a time when we carry a lot of extra calories to bed, so try to avoid this.* We mentioned a small breakfast, which shrinks your stomach and doesn't set your day up for three large meals. If you are hungry midday, eat a larger lunch allowing more time to digest a complex, rich meal. In the PM, exercise the most caution, because you must decide between hunger and habit. If you are truly burning through calories and are on an "after burn" – or an increased metabolism after intervals that maintains an increased basal metabolic rate (BMR) – then fill the void carefully (more on this in a future article). Understand that the hunger now is for a reason, not because it's what you usually eat out of habit.

Ideal Basic Diet

Breakfast

- Eggs with salsa for flavour, or omelet with vegetables
- One piece whole grain or non-wheat toast

Lunch - after exercise or normal (eat to fill not beyond)

- Soup - protein stock and vegetable, curry lentil, chicken noodle etc. Here I will tell you, ***never ever*** have cream-based soups or sauces, including hollandaise.
- Sandwich - heavy on the vegetables, with some meat
- Cookie

Dinner

- One serving of protein - vary each day: some fish, some chicken, some meat

- Vegetables or salad - as much as it takes to fill you up
- If you need a sweet try a few pieces of dark chocolate (careful - it may keep you up at night).

Remember the goal is to give the body what it needs. Break the habit of eating like a 15 year-old and adjust to your body's needs - listen and learn. Don't deny yourself treats; instead try to understand that they are just that – a “treat” – and so treat yourself a when you have done well.

It's about balance and education. Change now and you will forever be a different person. It's up to you!

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