Every Ride Has A Story

EVOLVE

THE CYCLING NETWORK FOR MUSLIM WOMEN

SPORTIVE NUTRITION GUIDE 2021

Written by:
Hanna Tejani ANutr &
Tehseen Mustafa RD

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MEET US:

Hanna Tejani is a Registered Associate Nutritionist who has recently graduated and is currently working in nutrition communication and content creation. Her interests and experiences include performance nutrition, non-diet approaches, and influences of culture on dietary patterns.

Tehseen Mustafa is an experienced dietitian who has worked in the NHS and privately over the last 18 years in a range of specialities. Tehseen is a lead student trainer and has specialist expertise in paediatric nutrition. Her interest in sports nutrition has developed over time and as a result of taking up running and cycling.

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WELCOME!

If you have signed up for the Evolve Cycling Network's inaugural sportive and are wondering how to best fuel yourself or find yourself overwhelmed at the information that exists surrounding nutrition - this guide is for you!

Created by a Registered Dietitian and Registered Associate Nutritionist you can be assured that we will bring together all the evidence surrounding the facts of nutrition, dispel some of the fiction and equip you with the tools to optimise your nutrition and overall sportive experience.

Throughout this guide, it is important to (accept and) understand that our bodies are all different. Influenced by our physiology, genetics, environment and a vast array of other factors. Remember, that the following advice will not be tailored to you specifically, but rather a rough guide with generalised recommendations.

If you have pre-existing health conditions or are working with another qualified health professional please stick to those recommendations.

Why Is Nutrition Important for Cyclists?

Nutrition is a key component across your sportive journey; from training to the day of the event itself. What you eat and drink will enhance your performance, build your strength and reduce your recovery time (1).

Road cycling is a physically demanding sport. The stamina required to complete a long-distance sportive coupled with the cadence and force required to cycle effectively (2), means that both nutrition and training are equally important to facilitate your best performance on the sportive.

Who Should You Get Your Advice From?

As nutrition professionals, we often get asked about an array of (nutritional) issues, although we are not the first point of contact. Most people will often have their own opinions on food and failing that, Dr Google is always on tap! It is important to get nutritional advice from credible sources. Here are different types of nutritional professionals you may come across (3)

Registered Dietitian

RDs are the only qualified health professionals that are allowed to work with complex health conditions working with both healthy and sick individuals - their title is protected by law. They are also regulated by the HCPC which means they uphold a strict code of ethics.

Registered Nutritionist

Registered Nutritionist and Registered Associate Nutritionist (RNutrs and ANutrs) are qualified to provide information on foods and healthy eating but cannot address specific health conditions. Whilst the term 'Nutritionist' is not legally protected RNutrs and ANutrs are regulated by the AfN - this means they are qualified and up to date with all the latest developments in the field!

RED FLAGS

What are the warning signs when looking for nutrition advice? (4)

1. **Anyone that promotes fad-diets and excluding major food groups**
2. **Uneccessary and expensive supplement recommendations**
3. **Quick fixes, detox claims, and 'magic' solutions**
4. **Promotion of single 'foods' e.g. kale or liquid chlorophyll**
5. **Weight loss products e.g. shakes, lollipops and teas**

For more info check out:

Nutrition Nonsense Detection Kit by Dietetically Speaking

The Misconceptions

Should I be dieting whilst training?

In short, no! Most qualified Nutritionists and Dietitians will strongly discourage fad dieting especially when discussing performance nutrition. Here are a few reasons why:

THE KETOGENIC DIET

The Ketogenic Diet is a dietary practice that involves high fat and low carbohydrate consumption. Although this diet has shown some benefit in reducing seizure frequency in children with epilepsy, the evidence relating it to general health status is poor (5).

Carbohydrates are probably one of the most important nutrients your body will need across the entire sportive journey. Research has shown that low carbohydrate diets have been linked to decreased performance, especially in women. It is therefore key that you are consuming an adequate amount of carbohydrates prior to the sportive and avoid omitting them from your diet (6).

INTERMITTENT FASTING

Intermittent fasting or time-restricted feeding is another popular dietary practice that involves consuming your daily food intake within a set number of hours in the day (7). Studies conducted in this area are very limited and very little research supports the claims that this aids in enhanced performance. In fact, research has indicated that performance was poorer in individuals who restricted their hours of consumption! (7)

We would advise that you structure your meals around your training rather than limit yourself to eating within a certain window for optimum performance benefits.

Moreover, most diets work through imposing a calorie deficit with the aim of weight loss. However, when training for such a physically demanding event (like a 37-mile sportive) it is recommended to eat within your requirements to maximize your performance during the sportive.

What Should You Eat?

There is no strict eating pattern for training and recovering from a sportive. However, there are some recommendations that you should try to implement into your pre-existing diet to help enhance your performance. It is important that you avoid restricting and limiting your intake during this time but rather fuel and support your body in working and recovering to empower a positive sportive experience.

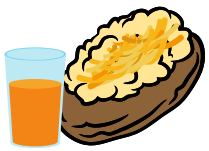
DURING TRAINING

Carbohydrates are arguably one of the most important nutrients across your sportive journey. They are essential in maximising our glycogen energy stores, fueling working muscles and they even play a role in repair during recovery periods. It is therefore important to consume adequate amounts of carbohydrates (8). On the days that you are training it is recommended to consume anywhere between:

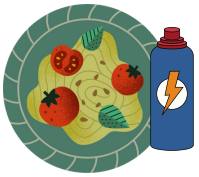
1-4 g/kg of carbohydrates 1 to 4 hours prior to your training sessions (9)

How much is this?

This is Sugra, she weighs around 70kg
She would need to eat between 70-280g of carbohydrates before she heads out for training. But how much is this:



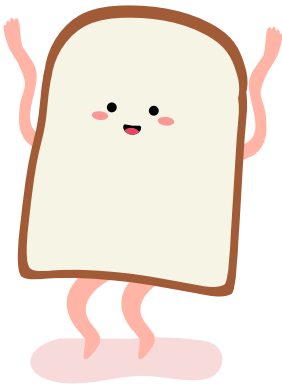
87g = a large jacket potato with cheese, sweetcorn & a small carton of orange juice



141g = large pasta portion with pesto, tomatoes, spinach & a 750ml sports drink

The amount you will need to consume will depend on the length and intensity of your training sessions. It is also key to limit your fat, fibre and protein intake close to training as these can result in gastrointestinal discomfort which will hinder your ability to train effectively.

Post-Training Recovery



After training, it is important to focus on your recovery as it is the essential period where we replenish the stores that were depleted during sessions and it plays a key role in enhancing your performance (10). Aim to consume 0.3 g/kg of protein within the first 2 hours after training (11).

This is Zainab, she weighs 64kg (last time she checked)

She would need 19.2g of protein after her training session. This would equate to:

18g = a small can of tuna in brine

17g = a can of drained chickpeas

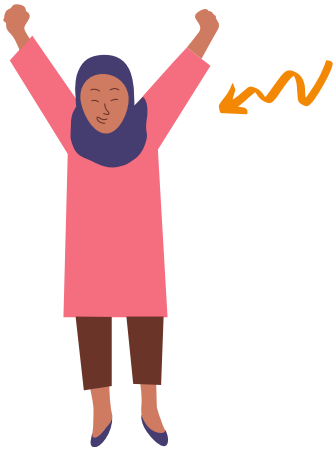
15g = 2 scrambled eggs (made with milk and added fat)

Other protein options also include:

7g = a 125g pot of plain yogurt

32g = protein shake made up with semi-skimmed milk

Your carbohydrate consumption during this time is also equally important and you should aim to have the same amount (0.3g/kg) post-training which again varies from person to person (11).



This is Aaminah, she weighs 86kg

She would need 25.8g of carbohydrates after her rides. This is roughly:

28g = an 80g portion of rice

28g = 2 slices of brown bread

You can use an App called Carbs & Cals to give you information about how much carbohydrates are in different foods.

Experiment whilst training with different meals prior to a ride. Aim for an amount midway between the range, gauge how you feel, and alter your carbohydrate intake accordingly.

search for "carbs and cals in your devices app store

Training & Hydration

Another key consideration for nutrition whilst training is hydration which is crucial to pre, during and post sportive recovery. It is beneficial in delaying fatigue and replacing those electrolytes lost when we sweat. In fact, did you know that some elite endurance athletes lose around 1.5 litres of sweat during training or competition! (12)

The recommendations for hydration are that 500mls should be consumed 2 hours before training with an additional 125-250mls directly before. During your ride try to drink 125-250ml every 10 to 20 mins if possible. After your ride, it is recommended to replace 1.5 x the amount of fluid you lost. **As it is generally quite difficult to calculate this aim to consume an additional 1.5L on top of the daily 2L requirement** (13).

What about sports drinks?

Sports drinks are a good way of fueling and replenishing electrolytes during your training sessions. They are not always required. Sports drinks typically contain carbohydrates, electrolytes and water. If your training sessions are less than 30 minutes it is unlikely that you will need a sports drink. However, if training between 1 to 2 hours, it may be beneficial (14). Opting for isotonic drinks would be the most suitable as they hydrate and provide energy.

BEFORE THE SPORTIVE

In the days leading up to the event, establish a sipping protocol. Keep a bottle filled with at least 2L of water and continuously sip from it. Do this for three to four days preceding the sportive to ensure you are well hydrated for the ride itself (15).

What about carb-loading?

Carb loading refers to increasing your carbohydrate intake in the days leading up to competition to try and maximise your muscle glycogen stores. Muscle glycogen is broken down during exercise to provide your body with glucose which is essential in energy production (16). Carb loading is a popular strategy amongst many trained athletes to ensure that they can delay fatigue and perform better.

In relation to the sportive, carb-loading will depend on your training status and other pre-existing health conditions. Therefore, it is advised to eat carbohydrate-rich foods for two to three days prior to the event, combined with a lower training load - this is because training excessively before the ride will deplete your glycogen stores.

Aim to replace some of the fats and protein in your diet with carbohydrates such as pasta, potatoes, rice, fruit juices, bagels and oatmeal. This will help fill up those glycogen stores and keep you going for longer during the ride (17).

The Evening Meal

The night before the sportive is an anxious time and getting a good night's rest is an excellent way to improve your performance! Alongside this, there are a few nutrition considerations to make. Opt for leaner proteins such as chicken and fish - they tend to be lower in fat and your digestive system will thank you for this. Furthermore, whilst your gut loves fibre, it is best to avoid this the night before and on the day of the sportive, aiming to consume white pasta, white rice, and white bread (18).

It is also advisable to avoid spicy foods as these can cause some discomfort the night before and during the ride. Staying away from foods high in saturated fats can also be beneficial during this time however, you can incorporate some unsaturated fats which includes foods such as avocado, nuts and seeds (19). Essentially what we are saying is that a burger with fries slathered with hot sauce (whilst delicious) may not be ideal!

You can add veggies too (these also contain carbohydrates). Some athletes even add a little extra salt to their meal the night before as sodium is an electrolyte (19).

THE DAY OF THE SPORTIVE

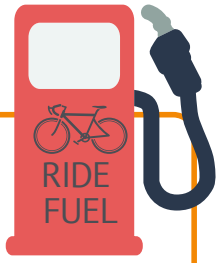
The day of the sportive is finally here!. Let's discuss some of the ways you can fuel yourself for the journey ahead. Many athletes tend to go for a high carb starchy breakfast 90-120 minutes before the event allowing plenty of time to digest (20). Food such as porridge or Weetabix are great sources of slow-release energy - perfect for the ride.

Some studies have suggested that caffeine can also be beneficial in boosting performance however if this is something that you don't normally consume it is best to avoid making this change (21).

The most important thing for you leading up to the event is to stick to your routine and preferences - don't make any drastic changes.

Ride Fuel

When fueling during the ride it is recommended to stop and refuel every hour, this is of course dependent on individual tolerance and is a general rule of thumb. The body cannot digest more than 30-60g per hour of carbohydrates during exercise so it is important not to over do it as this can impair your performance (22). To equate what this amount roughly means, you would be looking at consuming around:



- 1 Lucozade Sport energy drink = 32.5g
- 1.5 SIS energy gel = 33g
- 1 nature valley bar = 29g (whole bar)
- 1 snicker bar = 22g in a 44g bar
- 1 peanut butter sandwich (2 slices white medium sliced bread) = 36g

Hydration

Hydrating well across the ride will be beneficial in delaying fatigue, aiding your post-ride recovery, and replenishing the electrolytes you have sweated out. For exercise that lasts longer than 1 hour, it is recommended to hydrate with both carbohydrates and electrolytes rather than consuming solely water (15). Aim to:

- Drink 500ml to 1 litre per hour throughout the ride
- Opt for isotonic drinks
- Avoid fizzy drinks such as fizzy Lucozade/Redbull - these have been shown to cause gastric distress
- Keep an extra bottle with some form of electrolytes to replenish throughout the ride e.g. hydro tablets containing sodium, potassium and magnesium

If you are going to bring an energy drink with a source of carbohydrates in it - it is recommended given the duration and intensity of the sportive to opt for a drink that contains glucose-fructose (usually in a ratio of 2:1) - however, if this is not possible a standard glucose based drink will also be useful (23).

POST-RIDE RECOVERY

You did it! Finishing a sportive is no small feat so now let's get our recovery sorted so that the celebrations can commence. You have pushed your body to its max and it can take between 24-48 hours for your strength to return back to normal (24).

First 30 mins:

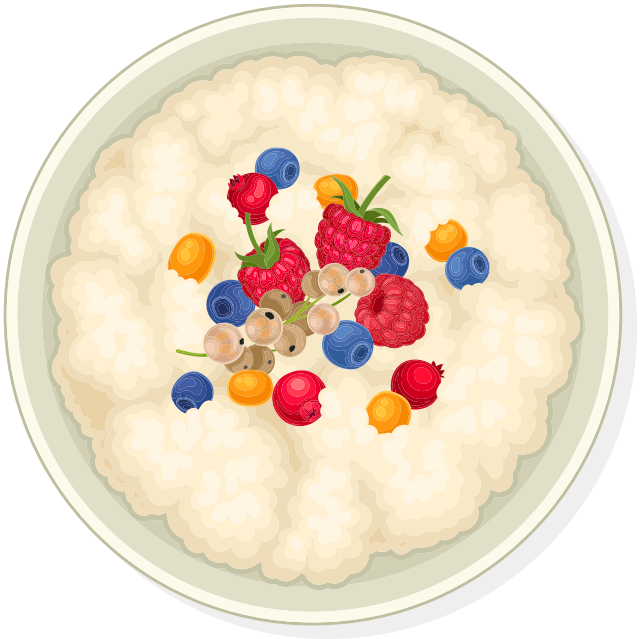
Consume some form of electrolytes, protein (around 10 to 20g) and carbohydrates - you can do this by continuing to sip on your electrolyte drink (as mentioned previously) and consuming a small sandwich or even some milk/milk-based drinks as these are high in protein and lactose sugars! (25)

Within 2 hours of finishing the ride:

Within 2 hours of finishing the ride you will need a hearty meal consisting of lean proteins and complex carbohydrates (these are our wholegrains such as brown pasta, rice and bread). You also want to incorporate small amounts of fat too such as hummus and avocado (20).

Finally, keep sipping water to replenish those fluids you have lost throughout the ride, ensure you stretch your body out and get some rest!

RECIPE IDEAS



Pre-event Porridge:

Serves 1

- 50g oats
- 200ml of milk (regular or plant-based) or water

Toppings: a few chopped nuts, sprinkling of seeds*, small handful of fresh, frozen or dried fruits, coconut, drizzle of honey/maple syrup

To make place the oats with milk and water and microwave for 1.5 minutes, stir and heat again if watery. Stir again once done and add toppings!

You can have this with some fruit juice to increase your carbohydrate intake!

Post-ride Blueberry Pancakes

(and can be made ahead of time)

Serves 4

- 125g wholemeal flour
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1 medium egg
- 300ml semi-skimmed milk
- 1 tbsp greek yogurt (optional)
- Pinch of salt
- 160g blueberries
- Olive oil (for greasing)

1. Combine the dry ingredients and mix till incorporated.
2. Add the egg and whisk till the mixture starts to bind.
3. Pour the milk into the mixture and whisk continuously until you smooth.
4. Add yogurt and whisk.
5. Add the blueberries and mix so they are dispersed evenly within the mixture.
6. Drizzle some oil in a pan and place on a medium heat.
7. Whilst waiting for the pan to heat up, pour your mixture into a jug - to prevent messy spills.
8. Once hot, pour some of the mixture into the pan and leave until air bubbles form on the top and the base is golden.
9. Flip and repeat for the rest of the mixture.
10. Serve with extra blueberries!

Roasted Chickpeas

(a great high protein snack)

Serves 4

- 1 can chickpeas drained
- Pinch of salt
- Chilli powder (optional)
- 1/2 tbsp

1. Preheat oven to 200 C
2. Drain and dry chickpeas and remove any loose skins
3. In a bowl add the chickpeas, a drizzle of olive oil, spices and mix
4. Bake for 20-30 mins or until crispy

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GOOD LUCK!

We wish you all the best for the sportive!

For any questions/queries please contact:

Evolve:
@evolvecycling on Instagram
evolvecyclingnetwork@gmail.com

Hanna Tejani:
hanna@tejani.org

Tehseen Mustafa:
@mstdietitian on Instagram
mstdietitian@gmail.com

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