

# Nutrition for Endurance Cyclists

Everyone's body and cycling speed is different, but you will be burning around 300-600 calories per hour of cycling, and your body will lose two to four cups of fluid. Climate can also affect these levels. We cannot stress enough how important it is for you to eat before you're hungry and drink before you're thirsty!

## Training Diet

- Eat plenty of carbohydrates to replenish depleted carbohydrate stores that occur with intense training.
- Eat enough protein to repair and build muscles.
- Drink enough fluids to prevent cramping and fatigue during exercise. You should be drinking a minimum of 10 eight-ounce glasses of fluid per day. If you drink caffeinated beverages such as coffee, tea or soda, you should drink two glasses of water per caffeinated beverage to counteract the water loss.
- Make sure you are getting enough vitamins and minerals to keep your immune system strong. You may want to take a multi-vitamin/mineral supplement to ensure you are getting adequate amounts.
- Make sure you eat within the first one to two hours after completing a training session. This is when muscles can most readily store glycogen (carbohydrate), and you will feel much, much better later in the day and the following day. If you don't have any appetite - or are short on time - try drinking a glass of juice or eating an energy bar.
- Keep energy bars with you during your training rides. They are a great source of protein and carbohydrates and provide a good boost of energy when you start to feel sluggish or fatigued.
- Don't forget to take a day off! Your body needs rest so it can restore glycogen levels. You will return to your training more energized and with less chance of getting injured.

## Your Overall Diet

- 60-70% carbohydrates
- 15-20% protein
- 10-30% fat

Good sources of the different food groups are:

<b>Complex Carbohydrates</b>	<b>Simple Carbohydrates</b>	<b>Protein</b>	<b>Fat</b>
Whole grain breads	Fruit & fruit juice	Lean meats	Olive oil
Vegetables	Hard candy	Low-fat dairy	Nuts & nut butter
Whole grain cereals	Pure Sugar	Fish	Avocado
Rice and pasta		Tofu/soy	Seeds
Beans		Beans	
Low-fat dairy			

## What to Eat Before You Ride

This information should be applied throughout your training schedule and during the CENTURY.

Your pre-ride meal should be eaten about 1-2 hours prior to the ride - if possible - and should be:

- High in carbohydrates
- Low in fat and fiber
- Small-according to the amount of food that you feel comfortable eating
- Eaten with fluids. You should try to drink 2-3 cups of cool plain water one hour before, and 1-2 cups about 15 minutes before starting.
- A sample, pre-ride meal might consist of orange juice, cereal, a banana, nonfat or low fat milk, and toast with jam. Or pancakes topped with fruit and syrup, nonfat or low fat yogurt and juice!

## **Basic Nutritional Guidelines During the Ride**

- You should carry at least two large water bottles with you, or - even better - a camelback and a water bottle. One should be filled with water and one should be filled with a sports drink, for electrolyte replacement.
- Try to go through at least one water bottle per hour, and double that if it is unusually hot outside. If you carry two water bottles, try to finish both by the time you reach the next Rest Stop.
- Don't wait until you're thirsty before drinking. If you feel thirsty, it means you are already dehydrated!
- Stop at every Rest Stop to fuel up on snacks even if you don't feel hungry. You need to make sure you're keeping your tank full throughout the day.