



## NUTRITION TIPS

**Remember**, when it comes to hydration and nutrition, **everyone is different**. You will generally be cycling between 100 & 300km a day and, therefore, burning up to 2,500 to 8,000 calories a day!

**Don't try something new on the event** – in the same way that runners don't buy a new pair of shoes to start a marathon in, you shouldn't start a new nutrition regime at the start of a multi-day event!

When it comes to cycling related supplements, gels, snack bars, sweets, nuts etc., everyone responds differently and it's important to take some time **before the ride** to work out what works best for you. **Try different combinations on the training rides** to see what you feel best with. Don't be afraid to ask questions of those who have done it before. And made the mistakes.

### Hydration:

Staying hydrated is just as important as taking on enough food, if not more. After all, we are around 60% water so we need to stay topped up. Not drinking enough water can significantly affect your ability to ride and lead to a prolonged recovery process (achy muscles!)

Many things will impact how much you need to hydrate, including how hard you are working and weather conditions. Monitor your hydration levels and try to drink 2-3 litres a day whether you're riding or not. Fruit and vegetable juices, sports drinks and water all count but alcohol, tea, coffee and sugary soft drinks don't.

It can be helpful to start the first stage of the day with a carb drink – you can buy powder or tablets in any good bike shop. This will make sure your energy levels are topped up to get you off to a positive start. **BEWARE** – people respond differently to different brands so it's definitely best to try these before the main event.

- For the first stage, have a second bottle with a dissolvable vitamin C tablet. It is actually quite refreshing and helps to keep those colds at bay!
- Aim to mostly fill your bottles with water. Carb drinks can become sickly after a few days and play havoc with your stomach! You should be getting enough carbs as long as you eat the right foods
- When drinking lots of water, you should drop an electrolyte tablet in occasionally to replenish vital salts and vitamins etc. Hydrate tablets are really useful and fit in your back pocket. Salt is important not only to replace that lost through sweating but also to help combat inflammation.

### When to drink

- The key thing to remember is not to wait until you're thirsty to drink, but to drink little and often from the start of the ride. Take 2-3 good sized gulps from your bottle every 10-15 mins. When you see other people drink and you haven't for a while, drink!
- It's a good idea to end the ride with a something to replace the salts and electrolytes your body will have lost through exercise and sweat.
- Make sure you keep drinking (water) in the evening and first thing when you are off the bike. It can be very easy to head straight to the bar for that well deserved glass of wine or beer and forget to keep hydrated!

**Remember, if you are thirsty, you are dehydrated!**



### Post ride Recovery:

Post ride, it is important to make sure you recover. There are lots of products on the market but after training chocolate milk or hot chocolate can be just as good as recovery shakes!

Recovery drinks in small sachets/tablets are really useful to take on the rides – they are easy to pack and to mix.

### Nutrition:

We can assure you, you will not go hungry!

On the bike it's important to remember to eat enough but not over fuel! Just because you are cycling does not mean it is an excuse to eat rubbish! **One or two snacks per stage** is usually enough. Think about the type of fuel that you need to take on. All of our bodies process different foods in different ways so play around with your nutrition while you're training to see what works for you – what can your stomach cope with and what can't it. Many people will go straight for the carbs and **sugar** to fuel rides, but these – sugar in particular – can cause major peaks and troughs in your energy levels. Don't forget **proteins** and **fats**. Back to back days of cycling will break down muscle mass, protein helps to rebuild and replenish. Fats (good ones) contain a lot more energy that is released more slowly than the sugar high.

### Top snacks:

- Muesli bars (Eat Natural, Trek, Nakd, Clif, Mule)
- Filled rolls (ham & cheese, jam, chocolate spread etc.)
- Bananas
- Apples
- Nuts
- Dried fruit (Raisins, figs, dates)
- Jelly Babies (amazing how you can make a friend or two with these in your back pocket)
- Chorizo
- Crisps
- Dark chocolate (75-80% Cocoa)
- Snickers and nut laden bars
- Energy bars – find those you like and stick to it but don't eat too many!



### What do you do if you “bonk”?

Glossary time...if you've not heard it before, 'bonking' might sound funny but it's no laughing matter. It essentially means 'hitting a wall' in a physical and emotional sense and potentially not being able to carry on with the ride.

We have all been there. Sometimes, no matter how hard you try, you get it all wrong and you simply have no energy to carry on. What should you do?

The first thing is not to panic. The most important thing is recognising the problem.

Symptoms can vary but generally follow a similar pattern and you could:

- Feel very weak/shaky
- Sweat a lot - more than usual
- Feel dizzy/light headed
- Have heart palpitations
- Be VERY hungry

You may also feel very emotional/irritable/anxious or confused.

Follow these few simple tips and you should be ok:

1. Take an emergency gel or high-energy source of food, eg. a banana
2. Drink plenty of water
3. Start talking to the person in the peloton next to you – this will take your mind off it while the gel kicks in
4. If you really don't feel great, let a ride captain know. It is better to be safe and take a few moments off the bike.

A favourite tip for avoid the bonk, is this. If you start to think negative thoughts, chances are you are approaching a bonk. The moment you start to think that the ride is not the most amazing thing you've ever done, grab a little something to eat or have a swig on your carb drink. Take a moment. Have another bite or swig. Smile and get your head back in the game.

If you catch it early, make sure you eat lots of high carb foods at regular intervals, you should not dip again.



## **Meals:**

Breakfast, lunch and supper are all supplied:

### **Breakfast**

Get down to breakfast on time and fill up with something hearty – eggs, bacon, beans (proteins and fat for that slow release energy). Make up a cheese and ham croissant/sandwich to stick in your back pocket for a snack a couple of hours later.

### **Lunch**

Usually a hearty baguette or bowl of pasta and a delicious cake. Try not to inhale it, take your time and let your body accept the nutrients. You can always whack it in your back pocket when you jump back on your bike – potentially not the cake, mind you.

### **Dinner**

You will always get a balanced dinner – meat, fish, veg, pasta, potatoes. You will not go hungry. And obviously, being Club Peloton, there will always be pudding.

In case you're worried about a lack of veggies (very possible in carby countries like France, Spain and Italy), and it's important to keep our body topped up with essential nutrients while undertaking extreme endurance events. Why not head to Holland & Barratt pre ride and grab some Supergreens, mix a little powder with some water and have as a drink with dinner – might stop you overdoing the beer too!

Or you could put a scoop of greens powder in your recovery drink and neck that. But mother was right – eat your greens!

**Finally...** It is important to learn to be able to eat and drink while on the bike without having to look at your bottles and without falling off. If you can't do this yet, remember practice makes perfect!