

## Training Tip #4

### Nutrition for Weight Loss and Performance

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Food is fuel and carbohydrates such as breads, pasta, cereal, fruits and vegetables are the primary source for your muscles during exercise. Proteins such as cheese, meat and nuts provide long-term storage energy and help build muscle glycogen (sugar) stores. With your increased exercise you will be burning more calories and while now is not the time to go on any drastic diets, if you are overweight, it is a good time to begin following a healthy well-balanced diet.

The key to weight loss is taking in fewer calories than you burn. Your training program will increase the number of calories that are used therefore, if you maintain your current caloric intake, you should experience some weight loss. Your goal should be weight loss of no more than 1 to 2 pounds per week. You do need to eat enough calories to support your increased activity, so listen to your body. If you are feeling weak and tired after a long walk, you may not be eating and drinking enough carbohydrates.

Remember that the addition of strength training during your cross-training days will also help to burn fat tissue while building muscle tissue. Muscle burns more calories than fat, however it also weighs more than fat. Do not weigh yourself more than one time per week. Instead, take notice of how your clothes fit and how you feel.

**During training:** Eat small amounts of carbohydrate every hour. The average person burns 100 calories/mile; this is equal to one small apple, 1/2 of a banana, 16 ounces of sports drink or 3/4 of a snack bar.

**Post training walk:** Consume carbohydrate-rich foods 1 to 4 hours after your long walks to replace your muscle glycogen stores and prevent next day fatigue. Do not binge eat. In your training diary, add a column for calories consumed. Keep an estimate of your energy expenditure and gauge your intake appropriately.