

## Nutritional Advice - Cyclists



You are about to embark on a tough cycle challenge. This is a tall order for your body and so in order to reduce the stress and shock that it will be put through, we suggest working to a training plan combined with appropriate food preparation. This information is given as a guideline only.

### Preparation

Everyone should be increasing their intake of carbohydrates in the run up to the event. Specifically the week before the event, participants should be 'carb-loading' (potatoes/pasta/bread) and drinking more water - 2 litres a day (urine should be clear). A good breakfast is scrambled egg on toast, as the bread provides the carbs and the egg provides vital protein and its all in an easily absorbed format. Even amateur cyclists can tell the difference between rides where they have prepared their diet well and those where they did not. Energy is of key importance.

### The Ride

On long rides it's recommended you sip water every 15 minutes and snack regularly every 30 minutes, (a bite of a banana, cereal/energy bars whatever you find easiest to digest). That can be quite tough though if you haven't done a lot of cycling. At least every hour a brief stop for both food and water is best.

No matter how strong a cyclist you are, everyone is going to be using up a lot of energy. Drinks are good ways of topping up your energy levels. Carbohydrate drinks can easily be mixed with water and sipped throughout the day. These mixers are available in different flavours from good bike shops and it's a good idea to test them beforehand. Specialist bike/running shops also sell energy 'gels' for when you feel you just can't go any further or 'hit the wall', they have an immediate effect. Carbonated drinks are not recommended.

### Post Ride

Re-hydration in the evening is very important. Your body needs to recover and prepare for the next days ride. Keep drinking water at regular intervals (your urine should still be clear).

Protein is much needed in order for your muscles to recover and rejuvenate. Protein bars/powder/drinks are all supplements that you might consider bringing with you.

Drinking alcohol isn't advised from a training or performance point of view!

Good luck!