

WIN your 5K

from DAN'S
HAND



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Thinking about lacing up those Nikes and doing a 5K? If so, congratulations! Way to NOT be a couch potato. This is a great activity and will yield many positive health benefits.

Most folks begin running to lose that spare tire. Statistics prove that running is one of the top fat burning exercises you can do; however, once you start, other health benefits become apparent. These benefits may range from improved mental alertness, lowered stress levels and even an increased positive attitude. There may be less apparent benefits that could be happening as well, such as slowing down the aging process, preventing muscle and bone density loss, promoting the production of human growth hormone, reducing the risk of stroke, osteoporosis, diabetes, hypertension — the list goes on and on, and it's all good.

So lace up those sneakers and get going! But wait! Aren't you forgetting something? Running is only half the battle — heck I would argue only 20% of the battle; the rest I believe is nutrition. Ugh! I know life just got complicated. But, if you truly want to lose that spare tire and maximize your efforts, get your nutrition right!

The Nuts and Bolts

Believe it or not, there is a difference in the nutritional requirements for competing in a 5K vs. a 10K, not to mention a marathon. Each event utilizes a unique combination of energy sources. Since there are three different energy systems within the body (Immediate, Glycolytic and Oxidative) and each serves a unique purpose, each of these events will require different nutritional adaptations. Look at it this way — you wouldn't pack the same amount of clothes for a two week trip as you would for an overnighter, right? It's about packing your body with the right nutrients to get the job done, and different jobs require different nutrients.

Your body's first energy system is aptly named the Immediate Energy system, and is for explosive-strength output. This system generates its energy through the use of ATP (adenosine triphosphate) and PC (phosphocreatine) and lasts just a few minutes in duration. This energy system will be mostly be used to begin your 5K and as you sprint towards the finish line, depending of course on your conditioning and aggressiveness.

The Glycolytic Energy system is the second energy system in the body. This system is for medium-term energy and for repeated near-maximum exertion, much like the energy needed to compete in a 5K. Like the Immediate system,

it is a non-oxidative system, meaning it functions without oxygen. Glycogen is used to produce this energy. Glycogen, like ATP and PC, is stored in your muscle fibers and is short term, like gas in a tank. Your body can only hold a limited supply — 800–2000 calories, and it is best stored from the carbs that you eat. If you don't eat right, your body will break down muscle and turn it into glycogen. Don't believe me? Just look at any long distance runner versus a sprinter — who has the most muscle? The Glycolytic Energy system will provide your primary energy during a 5K event; since these events are usually between 20–30 minutes long, you are using near-maximum exertion during the entire event.

The last energy system is the Oxidative system. This energy system will utilize more fat stores for its energy source because of the increased level of VO2 (maximum oxygen consumption). This system plays a greater roll in endurance athletes much like a 10K and marathon runner; however, it does play a small part during the 5K since duration can run over 20 minutes.

Getting Nutrition Right

- Consume a diet with a Carbs-Protein-Fat ratio of 55-25-20 respectively.
- Eat 5–6 small meals a day rather than 3 large ones.
- Consume complex carbohydrates in every meal, because these most effectively refill the glycogen stores in your muscles and liver.
- Eat a good meal 2–3 hours before your event. If this is not possible, be sure to consume a high-glycemic based drink immediately before your event. This will help to prevent muscle break down.
- Watch your fat intake. Large amounts of fat in your diet will add to your body fat and will cause mineral loss through frequent urination.
- Drink plenty of water while training and leading up to your event. With each gram of glycogen stored, you store 2.7 grams of water. Therefore, remaining properly hydrated will also help prevent weakened muscle contractions and early onset of fatigue.
- Most importantly, be sure to recover quickly following your event by drinking a high-glycemic Recovery Shake with a 3-1 ratio of Carbs to Protein respectively.

Eat Well!

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