

Nutrition

There are a lot of opinions on the best pre and post run nutrition for the best recovery. I think this article does a good job of presenting easy to follow guidelines without any fringe advice.

<https://www.runnersworld.com/nutrition/post-run-recovery-starts-with-protein>

Even in that article there are minor contradictions like eating 15 minutes after a workout vs 30 minutes or amount of protein to eat ranges from 15 grams on up. To get the right answer you need to match your weight, the difficulty of the run, and the distance of the workout with the post run nutrition. Here is how it do it.

The article recommends eating both carbs and protein in a 3:1 or 4:1 ration within 20 – 30 minutes of finishing a run in amounts appropriate for your weight. Usually I'm not home within 20 or 30 minutes so I started looking for easy to transport convenient alternatives. Chocolate milk was out because leaving chocolate milk in a hot car is not attractive. Here is my routine:

Pre-run

1. Stretch/foam roll.
2. Eat 1 banana 30 minutes before a run. Banana contain sugar plus some longer lasting carbs plus an important electrolyte, potassium. For half marathon or longer runs I often add half a bagel or grainy whole wheat bread about 60 minutes before the start.

During Run

1. Fluids
2. for runs over an hour some form of gel or chew if desired.

After run –

1. First priority is to replace fluids – I generally start with about 64 oz of water less what I estimated I drank during the run based on the fact that I generally loose about 4-6 lbs of weight during a run and $4\text{lbs} * 16\text{ Oz/lbs} = 64$. Then check urine color next time I go. If not pale yellow, drink more fluids. The answer is in the toilet.
2. Nutrition for runs over 8 miles starting within 20 minutes of the run :
 - a. Carbs - $\text{My Ideal Weight (160 LBS)} / 2 = 80$ grams of carbs – use these formulas to calculate recommendations for your ideal weight. See article above for more info.
 - b. Protein – $\text{My ideal Weight (160 LBS)} / 4 = 40$ grams of proteins.
 - c. To easily get the above after a long run I eat 1 or 2 protein bars each of which have 20 grams of protein each depending on the distance run. Then if over 10 miles I add a pancake (without syrup or butter) when I get home. It's important to convert what you eat also to calories to be sure what your eating isn't too much for the calories burned. We'll do that below.
3. Nutrition for runs 4-8 easy miles within 20 minutes of the run:

- a. Carbs – about 20 – 40 grams
 - b. Protein – 20 grams.
 - c. For me that is usually a protein bar and sometimes a small pancake (1/3 cup buckwheat pancake mix plus water, no syrup/butter) the total is about 200 calories for the protein bar and 200 calories if I add the pancake. Trying to keep it in the 200 – 400 calorie range
4. Stretching and/or foam rolling – I find foam rolling after I get home from a long run and once again a few hour later greatly reduces soreness.

When dealing with nutrition it can be difficult and confusing to think both in terms of grams of protein or carbs and at the same time in terms of calories. The best site I've found to give me both grams of carbs/protein and calories is <https://www.fatsecret.com>. I have that site on my bookmark tool bar for near constant access.

The above is just general guidelines explained more fully in the article and specific examples of my approach to meeting the guidelines. Your food choices should be things you like. I also tailor the above to the effort and the number of calories MapMyRun says I burned which includes pace and elevation changes.

Now let's cross check the above recommendation for a 8 mile run of grams of protein/carbs with calories: 80 grams of carbs plus 40 grams of protein = $120 * 4$ calories/gram of carb or protein = 480 calories. A rule of thumb is 1 mile run burns at least 100 calories so after 8+ mile run I should have burned a more than 800 calories so an initial recovery mini – meal of 480 calories plus 100 calories for the banana beforehand is totally reasonable = ~600 calories burned. Cross check complete! I like to do the cross check because you don't want to do 4 mile easy run and eat a recovery mini – meal suitable for a marathon! As a rule of thumb I like is to replace about ½ to 2/3 of the calories burned.

It's a pain/headache to work thru this the 1st time but once you do it's pretty easy to adapt it to any workout you do. Worth the effort in my option unless your one of those people who I will forever be jealous of who have trouble gaining weight.

Hope this helps!

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SARR Website