



STRENGTH & NUTRITION FOR RUNNERS

FREE GUIDE / RACE WEEK NUTRITION

THE RACE WEEK FUEL PLAN

Your day-by-day nutrition checklist to the start line.

The exact race week fueling we run with every Stoked Metabolic athlete. Carb load, the night before, race morning, during the race, and recovery.

FOR RUNNERS WITH A RACE ON THE CALENDAR

Nail your prep the week before and race day takes care of itself. No guesswork.

— THE PREMISE

You trained for months. Don't wing race week.

You put in the long runs and the strength work. Then race week shows up and most runners guess at the fuel: they carb load wrong, under-hydrate, and try something new on race morning. That's how a great build ends in a rough race.

It's almost never fitness. It's fueling. This is the checklist we run with every Stoked Metabolic athlete, so you show up to the line topped off, hydrated, and ready.

Race week has one job.

Get you to the start line fueled and calm. Every item here points at that.

— THE WEEK AT A GLANCE

Five checkpoints from Monday to the finish.



Early week

Eat normal, protein high, hydrate daily



2-3 days out

Carb load, ease off the fiber



Night before

Top off, hydrate, lay it all out



Race morning

Fuel 2 to 3 hours before the gun



During + after

Fuel the effort, then refuel

Each checkpoint has a job. Miss one and you feel it in the back half. Hit all five and your race matches the work you put in.

Monday to Thursday: steady and boring.

This is not the week to change everything. Keep eating the way that got you here, keep protein high to finish recovering from your last hard runs, and add a little water each day. Small tweaks only.

THROUGH THURSDAY

Protein · hit your normal target, 0.8 to 1g per lb

Carbs · steady for now, you'll raise them in a few days

Hydration · drink to pale-yellow, every single day

New foods · none, race week is not for experiments

Boring is the goal. Nothing new, nothing dramatic this week.

CHECKPOINT 2 · CARB LOAD

Carb load the right way, not the pasta binge.

A carb load is 2 to 3 days of higher carbs, not one giant dinner the night before. You're topping off glycogen so you have fuel for the whole race. Raise carbs, keep protein moderate, and ease off fiber and heavy fat so your gut stays calm.

THE NUMBERS

How much · 8 to 10g of carbs per kg of body weight, per day

How long · the 2 to 3 days before race day

Ease off · high fiber, heavy fat, and huge salads

Example · a 150 lb runner, roughly 550 to 680g a day

The simple version: make carbs the center of every plate and snack.

Four things before bed that protect your race.

1

CARB-FORWARD DINNER

60 to 80g of carbs, 2 to 3 hours before bed. Pasta, rice, or potatoes. Tops off glycogen without sitting heavy.

2

HYDRATE EARLY

16 to 20oz with dinner, plus electrolytes. Drink early so it absorbs overnight instead of waking you at 3am.

3

LAY EVERYTHING OUT

Shoes, watch, bib, fuel, and clothes by the door. Decision fatigue at 5am kills more long runs than tired legs.

4

PLAN YOUR RACE FUEL

Know exactly what you're taking and when. Write it on your plan, or your hand, if you have to.

Race morning runs on a clock, not a whim.

Give your body time to process breakfast, then top off right before the gun. Keep it familiar. Race morning is the worst time to try a new bar or a giant coffee you don't normally drink.

THE MORNING TIMELINE

On waking · 16 to 20oz of water, start sipping

2 to 3 hrs out · a carb breakfast, 1 to 3g carbs per kg, low fiber

15 to 30 min out · a gel or banana to top off, 20 to 30g carbs

Caffeine · only if you train with it, keep your usual dose

Familiar foods only. If you didn't practice it, don't debut it today.

CHECKPOINT 5 · DURING THE RACE

Anything over 75 minutes needs fuel on the move.

CARBS

30-60g/hr

Start by 30 minutes, don't wait to fade

FLUID

16-24oz/hr

More when it's hot or humid

SODIUM

300-700mg/hr

Cramps are usually a salt problem

Take a little on a schedule instead of waiting to feel empty. For long or fast races, a glucose and fructose mix lets you push toward 90g an hour. Practice your exact plan on long runs first, never debut it on race day.

The finish line is the start of recovery.

IN THE FIRST HOUR

Carbs · around 1g per kg to start refilling glycogen

Protein · 20 to 40g to rebuild what the miles broke down

Fluid · about 150% of what you sweated out

Sodium · add salt back, especially after a hot race

Real food within a couple of hours. The first bites just get things moving.

Recover on purpose.

Do it right and your next block starts strong instead of sore.

— AVOID THESE

The race-week mistakes that wreck good training.

SKIP THESE ON RACE WEEK

New foods · race week is not the time to experiment

Fiber overload · big salads and beans back up your gut

Under-hydrating · starting dry, then chugging race morning

Heavy, fatty meals · they sit in your stomach and slow you down

Alcohol · it dehydrates you when you need the opposite

None of these are complicated. Cutting them out is often the difference between the race you trained for and the one you just survive.

— SCREENSHOT THIS

Your race-week quick checklist.

NIGHT BEFORE

☐ Carb-forward dinner, 2 to 3 hrs before bed

☐ 16 to 20oz water plus electrolytes

☐ Gear and fuel laid out by the door

☐ Race-fuel plan written down

RACE MORNING

☐ 16 to 20oz on waking, keep sipping

☐ Carb breakfast 2 to 3 hrs out

☐ Top-off gel or banana, then nothing new

THE NEXT STEP

Want this dialed in for your race?

This checklist is the nutrition side of what we build with every Stoked Metabolic athlete. If you want it personalized to your race, your gut, and your schedule, that's exactly what coaching is for.

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I lost over 30 pounds, I've been injury free, and I PR every single race I run.

VALERIA · 8-MIN PR, 30 LBS DOWN, INJURY FREE

READY TO NAIL RACE DAY?

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Prefer to start on your own? Comment FUEL on the post for the full checklist.

Thomas Stokes · NASM CPT, CES · Precision Nutrition · 1,000+ runners coached