



# NUTRITION GUIDE

## *fuel your first 5K*

### 1 HYDRATE

Drinking water is a crucial part of everyone's diet, whether you run or not. Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink water, especially while running or racing. It is important to drink water after a workout or running session. Even if you don't feel thirsty, rehydrate with water efficiently and often.

### 2 SORRY, NO NEED TO CARB LOAD

Often, runners are steered toward lots of carbs, as they provide energy for your workouts. However, when training for a 5K, you're most likely not exceeding 20 miles per week in training. This amount of running doesn't require a major boost in your carb intake. Keep it at about 2.5 grams per pound of your body weight daily. This means if you weigh 140 pounds, you'll aim for about 180 grams daily. **Go for whole grains, such as quinoa and brown rice, as well as sweet potatoes and winter squash.**

### 3 LEAN PROTEIN

Protein is an essential component of all your tissues. It's especially valuable in helping you build and repair muscle, which you're doing a lot of while training. The average person training for a 5K does fine with about 0.5 grams of protein per pound of body weight, so that 140-pound person benefits from 70 grams per day. **Lean proteins, such as fish, white-meat poultry and trimmed steak are ideal options.**

### 4 GOOD FATS

Fats get a bad rap, but the unsaturated kind provides support for vitamin absorption and some, such as the Omega 3s, reduce inflammation so you recover from your runs adequately. Between 20% and 35% of your daily calories can come from fat. **Avocado, salmon and nuts are good sources of unsaturated fats.**

### 5 MIX OF VITAMINS & MINERALS

If you eat a variety of foods daily and choose mostly healthy, unprocessed ones, you'll get a good mix of vitamins and minerals to support healthy 5K training. If you have specific dietary limitations, such as a dairy intolerance or vegetarian eating plan, you might need to focus on specific nutrients. **Calcium:** This mineral supports bone health and muscle function. Dairy provides good amounts, but if you're an almond milk and soy yogurt fan, eat lots of leafy greens and canned fish with bones, such as sardines. **Iron:** Runners are vulnerable to iron loss from pounding the pavement. Get iron from red meat, but also from vegetarian sources such as leafy greens and lentils. **B Vitamins:** A whole complex of B vitamins exist and they're important to your energy levels. Get B vitamins in animal products, fortified whole grains and nuts.

# MEAL PLAN IDEAS

## BREAKFAST

Breakfast fuels the body and revs up your metabolism after a night of fasting. Include as many of the food groups as possible in your breakfast.

### IDEA #1

Oatmeal with berries  
Milk  
Walnuts

### IDEA #2

A vegetable omelet  
Whole-grain toast (On the go? Eat is like a sandwich!)

### IDEA #3

Smoothie with milk, yogurt, & frozen fruit  
Whole-grain toast

### IDEA #4

Healthy PB & J: natural peanut butter & fruit spread w/out added sugar on whole-grain bread

## LUNCH

The afternoon slump often follows a heavy lunch, so choose a lunch menu that is light and nutritious. Avoid refined or heavy carbohydrates such as pasta and fats that contribute to afternoon fatigue.

### IDEA #1

Vegetable soup  
Whole-grain roll  
Glass of 1% milk

### IDEA #2

Turkey on whole-grain pita w/ lettuce, tomato, & mustard  
Yogurt  
Apple

### IDEA #3

Mixed green salad  
Variety of vegetables  
Lean meat like chicken and/or low-fat cheese  
Toss with light vinaigrette

### IDEA #4

Black bean tacos: cooked black beans, chopped spinach, tomatoes, and grated carrots on corn or whole wheat tortillas

## DINNER

Use dinner to make up for nutrients you might have missed at other meals during the day. If you haven't had any fruit, include some with dinner or as dessert.

### IDEA #1

Fish  
Brown rice  
Roasted Brussel sprouts

### IDEA #2

Stir-fry with chicken and vegetables  
Brown rice

### IDEA #3

Whole-wheat pasta, marinara sauce, lean ground beef, green salad

### IDEA #4

Quinoa salad with spinach, feta, and tomato, tossed with olive oil

## SNACKS

Most training runs for a 5K, especially if you're new to the distance, are going to be modest enough that you don't need a pre-run snack or fuel during the run. Have a small snack of about 100 to 200 calories, however, if it's been more than 3 hrs since your last meal.

### IDEA #1

Whole-grain crackers, low-fat cottage cheese, and an orange

### IDEA #2

1/2 banana  
1 teaspoon peanut butter

### IDEA #3

Almonds  
Dried fruit

### IDEA #4

Air-popped popcorn  
Glass of 1% milk

## DESSERT

Following a balanced diet doesn't mean you cannot enjoy dessert. However, you need to watch your portion sizes and choose healthier dessert options.

### IDEA #1

Frozen banana pureed in food processor (vegan ice cream!)

### IDEA #2

Low-fat ice-cream or frozen yogurt

### IDEA #3

Dark chocolate

### IDEA #4

Fresh berries and milk