

Proper Carb Loading Plan 7 Days Out From Competition

1. What is carb loading? The process of maximizing the amount of carbohydrate glycogen stores in the body's muscles so that the muscles will be at their strongest energy levels when ready to perform.
2. How does it work? First the athlete needs to taper down on exercising, ending their last high intensity workout 5 days out from competition. During this time the athlete should eat a moderate amount of carbohydrates. At 3 days out from competition exercise must be at the lowest amount necessary and carbohydrate intake must be at an all-time high! During these three days the body will store carbohydrate energy in the muscles. Finally, when ready to compete, the athlete will have stored energy in the muscles making the athlete feel their strongest. This helps reduce muscle fatigue from coming on so quickly during a race.
3. An idea of how to eat the week of Sections:
 - a. Sunday: Balanced foods all day long between all food groups. (Do not need to overeat carbs on this day)
 - b. Monday: Balanced foods all day long between all food groups. (Can begin to increase carb intake or switch out some foods for more carbs on this day)
 - c. Tuesday: Still eat some balanced foods, but you'll want to make sure you are eating majority of your meals—carb focused.
 - d. Wednesday: Take out high fiber foods like apples, beans, grapes, etc. and begin to eat whole grain carbs instead such as bread, pasta, granola bar, power bars, bananas, rice, etc. In addition, pair your carbs with a healthy fat such as peanut butter, avocados, mixed nuts, olives, etc. Try not to eat anything with deep fried grease.
 - e. Thursday (SECTION PRELIMS!): Same as Wednesday with low to no fiber. Make sure you eat a carb, healthy fat and protein at each meal.

At the meet pack foods and drinks like: Gatorade, crackers, granola, instant sugars like glucose packs, energy bars (make sure they are lower in proteins during the meet), even a small handful of skittles works. Have a sandwich or a protein bar for you to eat during the meet and within an hour after you are finished racing.
 - f. Saturday: Same as Friday
 - g. HYDRATION: HIGH WATER INTAKE starting 7 days out from Sections all the way until competition is over!