

# Pooch to 5K Nutrition Guide

## Nutrition for Humans

Here are some guidelines to help you develop and healthy 5K nutrition plan:

- **Food Diary.** Firstly, take a look at your diet now. Keep a food diary for a week and be honest. Make a note of everything you eat and when you eat it. The food diary will give you a really good idea of the things you need to change about your eating habits.
- **Start counting.** Calories in and calories out are just part of the mathematical equation of losing weight and feeling better. You can't put all that hard work into accomplishing a 5K without considering your eating. So find out what calories are best for your weight and assess the amount that will give you a gradual weight loss of 1-2 lbs a week. As a guide, you should be looking to eat two portions of protein a day (eggs, lean meat, lentils), five portions of carbohydrates (pasta, bread, cereal), three portions of dairy (milk, yogurt, cheese), and at least five portions of fruits and vegetables.
- **Swap food.** If you normally have a sweet dessert to finish your dinner, have fruit and yogurt instead. Have fish instead of a burger; substitute white bread for wholemeal; buy semi-skimmed instead of full-fat milk.
- **Plan your menu.** At the start of each week plan your main meals. After a workout it is important to re-fuel your body. If you run and go straight to work without eating something, your body will not be able to repair it's muscles and you will soon begin to feel hungry - this is a dangerous time. Suddenly, that piece of chocolate or bag of crisps looks really tempting and before you know it, you've devoured the lot. Minutes later you will still feel hungry, but now you will have wasted all of your hard work on the run by filling your body with empty calories.
- **Snacks.** It is important that you eat snacks at regular points throughout the day. As part of your 5K nutrition plan, you must ensure that you have enough fuel to follow your activity program. Consider what you are snacking on. Crisps, cakes, biscuits and chocolate are empty calories - they have high sugar content but no nutritional value so they will not fill you up or give you the long-term energy you need. Instead, they will give you a quick burst of energy and then leave you feeling tired and lethargic.
- **Hydration.** It is really important that you drink plenty of water throughout the day. This will keep you alert, healthy and can also counter hunger pangs.

### **What to eat before a run**

One hour before - 150 calorie snack containing easily digestible carbohydrates and protein:

- Whole wheat toast with nut butter
- Banana and a small handful of cashews
- Whole grain crackers and hummus
- Small bowl of cereal
- Half a fruit and nut bar
- Cheese stick and carrots

15 - 30 minutes before - Small serving of easily digestible carbohydrates:

- Half a banana
- Applesauce
- A few saltine crackers
- Raisins

### **What to avoid before a run**

One hour before - Large meals and food that are difficult to digest:

- Spicy foods
- Pears, apples and melons

15 - 30 minutes before - Large servings of protein and carbohydrates, and highly saturated fats and fibre:

- Pasta
- Bagel and cream cheese
- Fried foods
- Granola or energy bar