

# NUTRITION

# GUIDE

OXFAM TRAILWALKER'S  
ULTIMATE GUIDE TO NUTRITION



PRIMARY PARTNER

NATIONAL PARTNER

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# WELCOME

ENSURING THAT YOUR NUTRITION IS ON THE RIGHT TRACK WHEN TAKING PART IN A PHYSICAL ENDEAVOR, SUCH AS OXFAM TRAILWALKER, IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS YOUR FITNESS TRAINING.

THIS IS OUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO FITNESS TRAINING NUTRITION.

THANKS TO THE TEAM AT BALMAIN SPORTS MEDICINE FOR PROVIDING THIS NUTRITIONAL ADVICE.

## CONTENTS

Fuelling up	3
What to eat before taking on a big event	4
What to eat during and after	5
Your Health	6
More info	7

Please note that the information in this handbook is for general guidance only and specific individual advice should be sought from your doctor, sports specialist and/or nutritionist as appropriate.

You may not be able to go the distance if you don't provide your body with the fuel it needs. Failure to hydrate properly can lead to serious consequences, including hospitalisation.



Photo: Jason Malouin/ Oxfam AUS  
Cover photo: Jason Malouin/ Oxfam AUS



# FUELLING UP

## CARBOHYDRATES

Carbohydrates are your main fuel source during high-intensity exercise, however, your body only stores limited amounts, so it's essential to replace them.

Carbohydrate rich foods include bread, cereals, starchy vegetables, legumes (e.g. lentils), fruit and their juices, dairy products, sugars, honey, soft drinks, cordial and confectionary. Scientifically-formulated sports foods (e.g. sports drinks, chews and gels) will also provide carbohydrates.

Many products also contain electrolytes, so assist with hydration. Whichever source of carbohydrates you choose to use, remember to test them during training. Some people find different sources of carbohydrate digest easier than others, with gastrointestinal upset common. It can be a good idea to get assistance from an Accredited Sports Dietitian with this.

## PROTEINS

Proteins are building blocks for your muscles. Whilst protein supplementation is incredibly common, most people already consume enough protein to meet their daily requirements. Foods that contain protein include meat (red, white and fish), dairy (such as milk and yoghurt), eggs, nuts and legumes (e.g. lentils).

## FATS

Whilst fat will be used as fuel during training, but you don't need to increase your fat intake during training or the event as your body probably already has enough fat available. Also, fat digests very slowly, so high consumption of fat during training or the event may result in gastrointestinal upset. Foods that contain fats include meat, dairy (including butter), eggs, margarine, oils, avocado, nuts, seeds, fried foods, takeaway foods and bakery goods.





# WHAT TO EAT BEFORE TAKING ON A BIG EVENT

**AS YOUR BODY CAN ONLY STORE A LIMITED AMOUNT OF CARBOHYDRATES, YOU CAN INCREASE YOUR STORE DIRECTLY BEFORE THE EVENT BY CARB LOADING.**

For 2-4 days before a big event, increase your carbohydrate intake. Great examples include sandwiches, muesli, oats, rice and pasta. Sports drinks can also be useful as a way of increasing carbohydrate intake, and increasing hydration status at the same time.

On the morning of your challenge, eat a high-carb breakfast one to four hours before the event to top up your carbohydrates one last time. Alternatively, if you have an early start, eat a bigger dinner the night before and a smaller, carbohydrate-rich snack in the morning. Or you can simply be mindful of eating carbohydrates early and consistently during the event to ensure your levels are topped up. This will help you avoid hitting the wall and running out of energy. Whichever option you choose to use, remember to practice in your training sessions, so you know it works for you.



Photo: Jason Malouin/OxfamAUS



# WHAT TO EAT DURING AND AFTER THE BIG EVENT

**WHAT YOU EAT DURING YOUR EVENT IS A PERSONAL DECISION AND SHOULD BE TRIALED THROUGHOUT YOUR TRAINING. THE FOLLOWING ARE A FEW BASIC TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED:**

- Eat meals and snacks that are high in carbohydrates.
- Eating every two-three hours should keep you on track. If you choose a running event, eating more often may be worthwhile.
- Meals can include sandwiches, wraps, rolls, noodle soups, rice and pasta.
- Snacks can include fruit (fresh and dried), pikelets, muesli bars, pretzels, bread with jam.
- Plan when you'll eat. It's often hard to replenish carbohydrates once you've hit the wall.

## HYDRATION

Ensure you maintain a steady intake of fluids, consisting of both water and electrolytes. Monitor your urine and ensure you are urinating at regular intervals and that the urine is light

yellow to clear. If urination becomes very frequent and clear in colour, you may be drinking too much. On the other hand, if you are not urinating or urine is dark in colour, you may be dehydrated. It is beneficial to consult a Sports Dietitian for a personal hydration strategy.

## RECOVERY

Drinking water and eating carbohydrates and protein is important for recovery. Around 15-30 minutes after your event, have a snack that includes some carbohydrates and protein as this will help you recover effectively. During this time, your muscles can easily absorb carbohydrates and protein. Also, make sure you drink plenty of fluids (including sports drinks) 24-48 hours after the event. Flavoured milk is a particularly great choice for recovery, as it contains a mix of protein, carbohydrate and electrolytes to help you refuel. Avoid drinking alcohol as it has a negative impact on the recovery of nutrition and soft-tissue injury caused by exercise.

Information provided by Accredited Sports Dietitian Chloe Mcleod, Balmain Sports Medicine. For more information, please consult a local sports dietitian via Sports Dietitians Australia.



Photo: Jason Malouin/OxfamAUS



# YOUR HEALTH

TRAINING FOR ANY ENDURANCE EVENT IS A SERIOUS PHYSICAL UNDERTAKING. IF YOU DON'T TAKE PROPER PRECAUTIONS, PARTICIPATION COULD CAUSE ADVERSE HEALTH CONDITIONS THAT COULD ULTIMATELY RESULT IN DEATH.

## PLEASE BE AWARE OF THE FOLLOWING RISKS:

### DEHYDRATION

Dehydration is the condition of having insufficient fluid in your body tissues. There is a serious risk of dehydration in undertaking a long and strenuous training. Dehydration can lead to impaired performance, vomiting and, in very extreme cases, muscle failure, potentially resulting in death.

#### Symptoms:

- ☐ Tiredness
- ☐ Irritability
- ☐ Tight/heavy-feeling muscles
- ☐ Headache
- ☐ Dry mouth and lips

*Note — symptoms are only apparent when you are already dehydrated. Symptoms are very similar to those of hyponatraemia.*

#### Prevention:

- Drink electrolyte drinks instead of, or in addition to, water. Try these during training to ensure you can drink them comfortably.
- Monitor your urine and make sure you are urinating at regular intervals and that the urine is light in colour.

If you are not urinating, or your urine is dark in colour, you may be dehydrated. If you experience any of the symptoms of dehydration, consult the medical staff at the nearest checkpoint or follow emergency procedures.

### HYPONATRAEMIA

Hyponatraemia, or water intoxication, occurs when you have consumed too much water. This results in reduced salt levels in the blood and body tissues. It is an extremely dangerous condition that can rapidly lead to a coma and may result in death.

#### Symptoms:

- ☐ Headache
- ☐ Fatigue
- ☐ Nausea
- ☐ Lack of coordination

*Note — these symptoms are very similar to those of dehydration.*

#### Prevention:

- Drink electrolyte drinks instead of, or in addition to, water. Electrolyte drinks contain salts and thereby assist in maintaining the correct salt balance in your body.
- Monitor your fluid intake. Drink just enough so you don't feel thirsty and are urinating at normal periods. If urination becomes frequent and clear-coloured, you may be drinking too much.

If you experience any of the symptoms of hyponatraemia, consult the medical staff at the nearest checkpoint or follow emergency procedures.

### HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia is a condition in which your core body temperature drops below 35°C. If left untreated, hypothermia can ultimately result in heart failure and death.

#### Symptoms:

- ☐ Fatigue
- ☐ Shivering
- ☐ Muscle spasms
- ☐ Clammy skin
- ☐ Stammering
- ☐ Hallucinations

#### Prevention:

- Carry warm clothes and be prepared for dramatic temperature drops.
- Wear extra layers of clothes. Change into warmer clothes when it gets cold, especially at night.
- Carry a change of clothes in case you get wet.
- Change out of damp sweaty clothes.

If you experience any symptoms of hypothermia, follow emergency procedures.

### HEAT EXHAUSTION

During hot weather, the body's internal temperature can rise, resulting in heat exhaustion or heatstroke. In extreme conditions, heatstroke can ultimately lead to heart failure and death.

#### Symptoms:

- ☐ Muscle weakness
- ☐ Nausea
- ☐ Fast, shallow breathing
- ☐ Irritability
- ☐ Severe headaches

*Note — as the condition worsens, symptoms include confusion, decreased responsiveness, little-to-no sweating and flushed, hot, dry skin.*

#### Prevention:

- Maintain adequate fluid intake.
- In exposed sections of the trail, wear sunscreen and a hat.

If someone exhibits symptoms of heat exhaustion, find a shady area, administer frequent sips of water and follow emergency procedures.

### YOUR CONDITION

Your ability to safely complete Oxfam Trailwalker is greatly impacted by how you're feeling just before the event.

#### Factors to consider:

- Are you recovering or suffering from an illness?
- Did you participate in another endurance event within two to three weeks prior to training?
- Did you have a big night out (ie late night and/or high alcohol intake) within a week prior to training?
- Have you been on a long-distance plane trip within 48 hours prior to training?

If you answer 'yes' to any of these questions or, if you feel less than 100% for any reason, reconsider undertaking any strenuous training and seek advice from your GP or healthcare professional.



# FIND MORE THAN JUST THE FINISH LINE.

Oxfam Trailwalker is a life-changing experience. As well as being an incredible physical and mental challenge, every step taken helps people living in poverty.

You and three mates will journey through 100km of bush trail within 48 hours.

It's not a relay. Your team has to start together, stick together and finish together — it's tough, but with the right training and attitude you'll be amazed at what you can achieve. The feeling when you cross the finish line will be something you'll never forget.

Each year more than 2,000 teams take part across Australia — with the support of more than 2,500 volunteers and 6,000 support crew members — and raise more than \$6 million to help end poverty.

## OXFAM TRAILWALKER

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