

# Healthy Habits Guide for Athletes

## Sleep

- 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night
  - **Most important** - go to bed at the same time every night
  - Try to get up at the same time each morning to establish your daily rhythm
- Methods for achieving optimal sleep
- Natural sleeping aids e.g. complex carbohydrates, triptophan – apples, bananas, milk and turkey all contain high amounts of triptophan
  - Sleep rituals e.g.; music, meditation, relaxation techniques, white noise
  - Avoid all electronic devices 30 minutes before bed

## Nutrition

- Right types of food
  - Lean meat
  - Complex carbohydrates
  - Fruits and vegetables
  - Whole grains and cereals
  - Variety
- Right amount of food (See Athlete Plate diagram and sample fueling plan)
- Right timing of meals to match needs
  - 3 meals a day and 2-3 snacks a day
  - Proper planning e.g.; talk to the primary shopper in your house about what to buy, go with them
  - Breakfast, mid-morning snack, lunch, pre-work out snack, dinner, bedtime snack
  - Snack ideas: Trail mix, carrots and hummus, apple and peanut butter, Fig cookies, Honey Stinger Waffle and grapes, ½ bagel and nut butter, Pretzels and peanut butter, Whole grain bread and peanut butter and banana, Deli turkey in a flour tortilla with shredded veggies. Ideal to have a protein and carbohydrate at each snack.
- Avoid dairy and high fiber foods before workouts and races

## Hydration

- Water Bottles – DON'T SHARE! Carry everywhere.
- Right amount – At least half your body weight in ounces each day.
- Right time – All day long and 16 oz within 20 minutes of stress run
- What to drink – water first, then an electrolyte drink (Skratch, Nuun) or chocolate milk, then more water

## Prevention/Correction of Vitamin or Iron Deficiencies

- Prevention of vitamin or iron deficiency is best achieved through adequate dietary intake
- Iron deficiency can be common in runners.
- Recommend getting iron (ferritin) tested each year. Target is at least 40-50 ng/ml for athletes.
- Special consideration for female athletes. If you have irregular periods or haven't had a period for over 3 months. Talk with your physician.

## Post Competition Protocol (includes hard practice days)

- 16 ounces of water from your water bottle
- Elevate legs 6 – 10 minutes
- 12 – 16 ounces of electrolyte drink or chocolate milk
- Massage stick
- Snack within 30 min after workout (mix of protein and carb).
- Eat proper meal within 2-4 hours
- Drink 24 ounces of additional water
- Sleep 8 –9 hours, in bed normal time