



Top Nutrition Tips for Amy's Ride SA By Accredited Practising Dietitian, Glenn Cardwell

The ride has six different distances: 12km, 30km, 35km, 70km, 100km and 125km with the last one including 1400m of ascent. The longer the distance, the more important is good nutrition and wise hydration. Foods naturally high in carbohydrates are crucial for topping up the muscle fuel, known as glycogen, which is your muscle 'petrol tank'. When a muscle contracts and works hard during a ride, especially during hill climbing or sprint work, it burns the glucose that has been released from the glycogen stored in muscles.

Tips for long distance riders

1. **Eat something before the ride.** It may be as simple as a yogurt or a banana for the shorter distances, but you need a little more for the longer distances, such as beans on toast, breakfast cereal and milk, with a banana, or a banana smoothie. These are examples of carbohydrate-based foods necessary to fuel your muscles. Try and have breakfast 90 minutes before the start of your ride.
2. **Drink lots of water!** If it is warm, then drink early in the ride. It takes about 20 minutes for each cup of water to get from the stomach to the small intestine where it is absorbed and replaces sweat lost. During this time you have lost more sweat, so it is smarter to drink early in the ride and drink small amounts frequently to minimise your risk of a stitch. Allow for one bidon (600 mL) per hour, more if it is warm.
3. **You will only need a sports drink if you are cycling for more than 90 minutes.** You can drink them just before, during and in the recovery period after the event. I suggest you drink to replace most of your sweat losses, about 400-600mL per hour. It may be more if you are a heavy sweater or if the temperature gets warm. If you are cycling for less than 90 minutes then water is all you need.
4. **Snacking during the ride.** We don't have to tell you that the banana is the bike riders' favourite snack. Published research shows that a banana is excellent when cycling 70-125 km. Eating two bananas an hour (with water) on the bike helped maintain energy levels just as well as a sport drink. It is those beautiful carbohydrates in the banana that are fuelling the muscles so they can keep cranking out the pedal power.
5. **Make every effort to hydrate soon after a training ride and the event.** Tea and coffee can be part of your rehydration program, as it is not true they are dehydrating. You do need to pee out the metabolites of caffeine but that is only around 50 mL of pee per 250 mL cup of tea or coffee. That means that the other 200 mLs in the average cuppa is part of your fluid intake.

For the latest news and information, 'LIKE' Australian Bananas on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/AustralianBananas