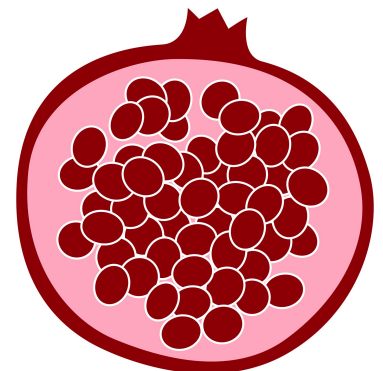


Nutrition Tips for Missoula Kids Marathon

1. Active kids need fuel for sports, school, and every day health. Start by building a healthy base of carbohydrates including whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. The best diet for healthy kids: 50-55% of calories from carbohydrates, 10-15% from protein, and 25-30% calories from fat.
2. Protein plays a role in building muscle, tissue, and maintaining a healthy body. However, a high protein diet is not recommended for budding athletes. Top protein food sources include chicken, meat, fish, dairy products, beans, and legumes.
3. Go low fat for optimal health. Having some fat in the diet is important for health and a key energy source for young athletes. Make sure to choose low fat products when eating meat, fish, nuts and dairy products.
4. Eat a rainbow! Fruits and vegetables are great sources of vitamins and minerals. Challenge yourself to taste a different fruit or vegetable from A- Z every week. Make sure to include your favorites every day too!
5. Calcium is crucial for athletes. Calcium helps to build strong bones which are less likely to break under the pressure of physical activity. Searching for good sources in addition to dairy products? Try dark green leafy vegetables, and calcium-fortified products like orange juice.
6. Remember to play hard include good sources of iron including meat, dried beans, dark green leafy vegetables, and fortified cereals into your diet. Without enough iron you can feel tired and weak – not at your marathon best.
7. Eat a champion's breakfast. Fuel up to be at your racing best beginning with a breakfast that includes whole grains, fruit, and a calcium source. Examples include whole grain cereal with milk and a banana; low-fat yogurt , blueberries, and a muffin; or if you are in a time crunch try a bagel, cheese stick, and apple.
8. Top athletes know to be at their best they need to include a wide variety of foods in their diet. If you find you're eating the same foods all the time challenge yourself to include at least 3 new foods a week into your diet.
9. A pre-exercise meal is important to supply energy to your working muscles. Two to three hours before exercise focus on carbohydrates, and add in a little bit of protein and fat. Don't forget the fluids as well. (for example: pasta with chicken marinara sauce, milk, and fruit)
10. Focus on fluids to keep you from overheating. Water is a great low-cost choice. Make sure you drink 8 ounces (1 cup) of fluid for each 30 minutes of exercise. Bring your own refillable bottle with you to school, in the car, and on the track.

11. Carbohydrates are the main fuel for your body. Carbohydrates stored in a kid's body are limited and so remember to re-fill your tank every day. Top food sources include pasta, rice, breads, milk, yogurt, cereals, fruits, and crackers.
12. Snacks can contribute to your healthy diet. Choose foods for snacks that are missing from your meals. For example, choose a fruit or vegetable if you have not had at least two servings by noon.
13. Choose your foods wisely. All foods can fit into a healthy diet in moderation. An easy rule of thumb: 90% of the foods you eat every day should be foods that fuel your growing body. The other 10% can be fun foods – eaten for enjoyment.
14. It's getting closer to the big day. Make sure that the night before your run your dinner includes plenty of carbohydrates. Why not try beans and rice with avocado and a fresh fruit salad.
15. Remember to start your day with breakfast. There are plenty of foods you can prepare on your own including low-fat cheese melted on toast, apple and cheese slices between graham crackers, or a breakfast parfait of yogurt, fruit and low-fat granola.
16. Bring a super snack bag for after a run. Have your parents help you pack an insulated bag filled with high-energy snacks for after your run. Choices can include crackers and cheese, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, trail mix, containers of fruit and vegetables with dip – and don't forget to the fluids.
17. Make sure you replace all the fluid you lose when you exercise. Water is great, but for exercise that lasts longer than an hour sports drinks will help keep you hydrated and may help increase your overall fluid intake.
18. Make the first hour after your run count. Refill your 'tank' with food and fluids right after you exercise. Choose foods that are high in carbohydrate and low in fat.
19. Avoid sugary foods like soda or candy bars tight before you run or do any type of exercise. You might feel like you get a little energy boost, but it will fade fast and may leave you with an upset stomach.
20. Remember by eating and drinking the right stuff you will be able to perform your best. Now go out there and have a great run!

These tips are brought to you by the Missoula Kids Marathon and were supplied by Laura Del Guerra, Registered Dietician and Certified Diabetes Educator
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Eat Well. Stay Active. Reduce Your Risks.