

EATING for PERFORMANCE WEIGHT LOSS



Safe Weight Loss Strategies

Weight loss programmes need to be personalised to the individual so it may be beneficial to contact a Nutritionist for best results, but this hand out should give you some basic tips and tricks on how to lose weight safely.

Before you decide you want to lose weight, you need to make sure your goal weight is realistic. As an athlete, you need to be aware that if you are training at high intensities, you will need enough energy from food in order to maintain an optimal performance.

While most athletes talk about losing weight, what they actually want to achieve is a loss of body fat. In fact, for successful long-term weight loss, the goal is to lose body fat while preserving muscle mass.

The two main factors influencing energy balance, are energy intake and energy expenditure. Therefore, you should be expending more energy than you are consuming in order to lose weight. A safe and sustainable amount of weight loss is 0.5-1kg per week.

Tips for weight loss

Tip 1: It is preferable for you as the athlete to reduce your daily energy intake by 10-20% for example if you are consuming 2400 calories a day you should reduce this to 2160-1920 calories (this is just an example number).

Tip 2: Plan the timing of your meals, for example have snacks or meals after training sessions, this will promote recovery as well as use the nutrients for energy rather than store it as “fat”.

Tip 3: When you feel hungry, make sure it is because you are hungry and not because you are bored. If you want an unplanned snack have a piece of fruit or vegetables, these foods should fill you up as well as provide you with vitamins and minerals you need.

Tip 4: Include protein in each meal, this will increase your feeling of “fullness” as well as help with repair and maintenance of lean muscle mass. For example: chicken breast, eggs, lentils.

Tip 5: Substitute High glycaemic index carbohydrates for Low glycaemic index carbohydrates. For example wholemeal bread instead of white bread, kumara instead of potato, brown rice instead of white rice, oats instead of cereals, nuts,

and legumes.

Tip 6: Increase your intake of food high in Fibre. For example fruits, such as apples, pears, and berries; vegetables such as broccoli, carrots, kumara, and oats.

Tip 7: Substitute sports drinks for a healthier alternative, without sacrificing electrolytes and carbohydrates needed for recovery. This can also save money in the long run (example recipe below).

Sports drink recipe

- 1/2 cup fresh orange juice
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- 2 cups of water (filtered or purified) or raw coconut water
- 2 tbsp organic raw honey or organic maple syrup
- 1/8 tsp Himalayan Pink salt

Instructions

Blend it all together and store in the refrigerator.

