

Our advice to get ready for the Tour des Stations!

We are glad to see you back, with one month to go before the event, and hope that your fitness is increasing, and you could add some kilometers in your legs since last month.

Today, we will discuss about nutrition, on & off the bike; before, during & after the race.

1. How to eat right during training?

A steady energizing intake is key for good quality training, as well as to increase recovery between trainings.

During “short” rides (< 1h30), it’s usually not necessary to eat, except if your training is far from your last meal or if it’s an intensive session. In that case, the intake of an energizing gel might be needed.

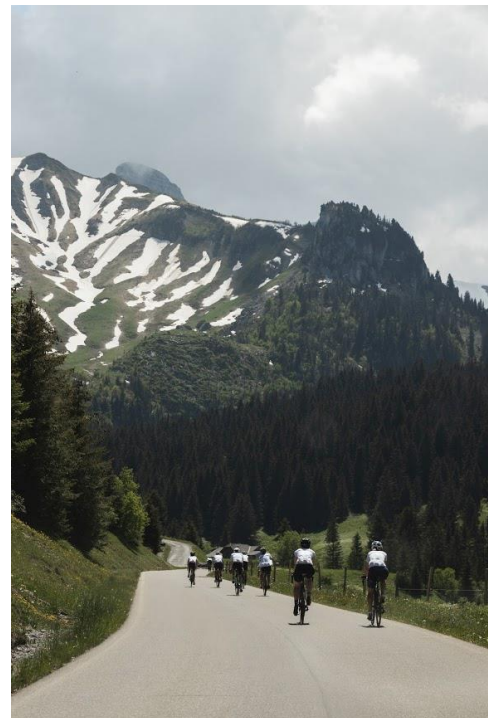
During longer rides (>1h30), we recommend you to eat ½ an energy bar (or other energizing food) every 30 minutes, starting from the beginning of your ride. It is during the effort that your body needs energy.

If that intake is insufficient on the bike, you might risk to be hungry and eat more than needed once training is done. That food would be store instead of being consumed when cycling.

When training, it’s important to favor « solid » food (such as energy bars) at the beginning of the ride, before to go for « liquid » food such as gels, the closer you get from the finish line and the lower your glycemia level will be. Solid food with full a bit more your stomach and will give you a satiety feeling, which the gels will not.

Regarding drinking, we recommend you drinking around 500ml per hour. Water or electrolytes are good for short and non-intensive rides. For longer rides, energizing drinks (such as isotonic drinks) is recommended. You can even alternate one bottle of energy drink and one bottle of water, to limit your sugar intake.

The coach’s trick: with an energy bar every hour during your trainings, the money dedicated to feed is substantial. We advise you to vary your food intake on the bike with not only energy bars, but also with typical food, such as homemade cake, marzipan, gingerbread, banana,... even with potatoes, salted almonds, jerked meat,... if you like salty food when training/racing.



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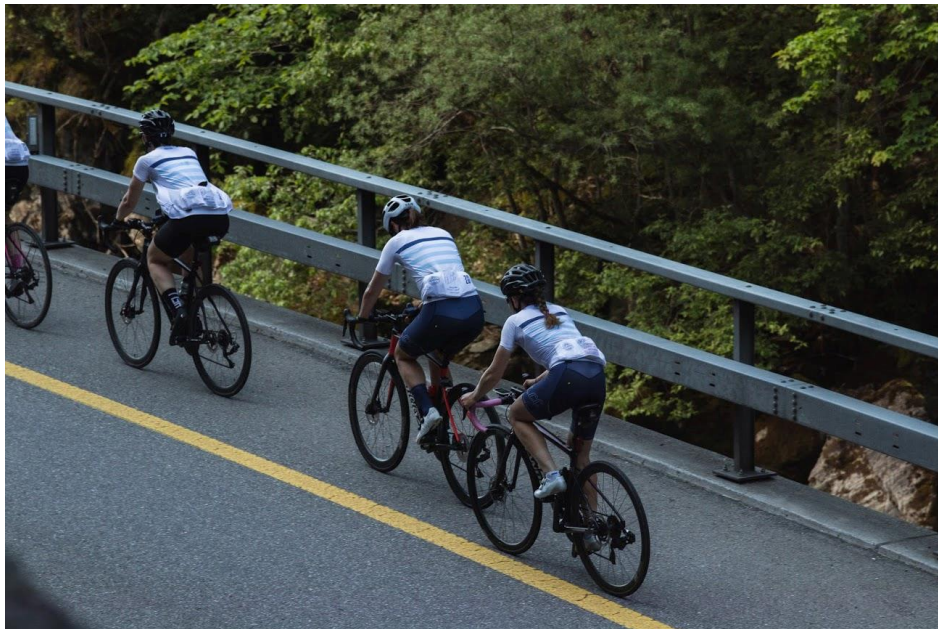
2. How to eat well before and after training:

If your previous meal was more than 3h before your training, we advise you to eat a snack around 1h before your ride. Banana, protein bar, piece of bread ham/jerked meat,... will bring you more energy to put on your pedals.

Post-training food depends on the type of training you did (intensive or not), its duration (short, medium or long) and when you are done with it (closed or far from your next meal).

If your ride, short or long, intensive or not, ends just before your next meal, we recommend you to eat directly after your training, without having a recovery drink, as long as your meal with well balanced (containing the three macronutrients: carbohydrates, proteins & fats). Quantity stays the same as usual if training was short or medium (intensive or not), however, you can increase reasonably carbohydrates & proteins quantity after a long ride.

If your training session ends more than 1h before your next meal, we suggest you to have a recovery drink (especially if the intensity was high) or a snack (especially after a long ride) such as fruits with oilseeds, white yoghurt, dark bread,... Those intakes will help the post-ride recovery as well as avoid that you would eat too much during the next meal, by decreasing the hunger feeling.



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3. Which food should I eat before, during & after the race:

During the last days before the race, it's important to keep a well-balanced food intake, but also to think about your glycogen storage. Glycogen is a stock of carbohydrates (or sugar), stored in your muscles and liver. Carbohydrate's intake should be sufficient (but not excessive!) and steady the days before the race.

The coach's trick: maltodextrin, which we can usually find as powder to mix to water, is an interesting way to fill your glycogen stock. Maltodextrin has a very low glycemic index and will bring you a steady intake of carbohydrates, starting around 3 days before your race.

We are the D-Day, day of the Tour des Stations. We have now to think about pre-race meal or breakfast. We advise you to test the food you plan to eat before the race, during a normal training day, in order to be sure that the digestion will be ok on Race-Day. We also recommend you choose a digest meal, similar as what you usually eat for breakfast (i.e. dark bread, oats, eggs, ham,...), with a sufficient energizing

intake but with a reasonable quantity. It's better to avoid fruits or juice (difficult to digest), cow milk (for people who did not tolerate well lactose) as well as food with high glycemic index (such as croissant, chocolate bread, cereals with a lot of sugar,...). Pre-race meal should take place at least 2 hours before the start.

Since the beginning of the race, we advise you to eat ½ bar every 30 minutes, before to go for gels in addition to bars, starting from the second half of the race. Don't hesitate to stop at the feeding zone, fill your bottles as much as you need, use the chance to eat different food than bars (such as banana, dried fruits,...).

After the race, we recommend you drink and hydrate yourself enough and go for a recovery drink or a balanced meal. In the first minutes after the end of the race, we usually talk about a "metabolic window", where everything that you eat will be "eliminated". It's not exactly what it is. The reality is that the metabolic window exists, but everything that you will eat will be consume (and not eliminated). It is thus the right moment to eat high glycemic index food which will help you glycemia to be back at an optimal level.

You are looking forward meeting you again next month with our last advices section about getting ready for the Tour des Stations!

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