

There are various other documents available

North West Athletics

Fuelling Junior Athletes



This sheet should be **read in association with:**

1. Ideas for high carbohydrate recovery snack and meals
2. Fuelling and Cooling Junior Athletes

If the young athlete wants to achieve their best, appropriate nutrition is part of the challenge, and if we want to help them, **we** must help them make the right choices, even if nerves prompt requests we know to be not in their best interest.

It is pleasing to note the improvement that the swimmers and runners in our group are presenting.

Performances are generally in-line with the extent of input they are choosing to make to their training.

Worthy of comment is the competition-day dietary habits that have presented themselves as swimmers seek to achieve improved outcomes.

Several of the NWA athletes (in the main senior athletes) have well established, responsible dietary habits, and it has been suggested that more guidance could be given on the issues of training (general) diet and race day eating.

Several circulars have been released at various times, and I accept that some parents may have missed their content. Accordingly, I have attached relevant material; and, let me recommend 5 minutes reading of the second back page of the *Sun-Herald* each day .. I'm sure ideas presented will be of interest, they are certainly of relevance.

I have had several personal discussions with **Louise Bourke** (Dietician, AIS), gained much from presentations by sports dieticians, such as **Karen Campbell** at the Geelong Swimming Intensives, and at various conferences.

Clearly: *we are what we eat* .. there are **no** exceptions. I claim to be no expert, but little more than common sense is required to empower youngsters with basic nutritional knowledge and a dietary plan that can help prepare them do be the best they can be.

Too many youngsters treat (and are allowed to treat) race day as a licence to eat what they like .. diet on race day for all NWA athletes (swimmers and runners) **MUST** be kept as normal as possible. It is our way of contributing to the best of which the youngster is capable; not always easy, as swimmers, parents and coaches can all display nerves.

Eating (and /or craving "quick fix" foods) is too often a nervous reaction. Giving the child what they want, ask for, or demand, is seldom the course of action that will contribute best to them doing their best.

Don't be a victim of the advertising message that implies that lollies, chips, junk food are an appropriate pre-event energy source, between event snack, or a well earned reward.

No chips, no hamburgers, no biscuits, the list goes on; we are all bombarded with the healthy diet message; we must have the courage to heed and follow the advice.

Fruit, easily digested sandwiches, appropriate drinks are the go; (and, **don't over-eat** even good foods.)

It is very frustrating to see some youngsters constantly consuming food, often inappropriate food, on the pretext that they want / need it because it's race day .. this is not true. As their coach, I am not prepared to watch potential eroded by inappropriate eating. If eating is the reward, there is no need to train.

There is very little the athlete can do in the 48 hours prior to competition to enhance their physical preparedness; there are **many things** they can do to inhibit their performance, (e.g. poor dietary choices, inappropriate rest).

There are no magic training programs, only differences in the way training is approached.

As standards improve, progression increasingly becomes a question of attention to small things

(e.g. diet, recovery strategies, appropriate rest).

Champions are distinguished by differences .. the different things they do, and the things they do differently.

NWA Athletes

Expectations of young swimmers and runners ..

Full water bottle(s)

.. water from home is best; don't rely on supply at the venue.

Fuelling and Cooling Junior Athletes .. you compete on the

energy value of the food you consumed the day before the meet .. check out the **Simple Quick Snacks**.

Consumption of lollies is **not** acceptable, nor are chips, sweet biscuits, nor any form of junk food .. when asked how many small jelly snake lollies would be appropriate at a carnival, Louise Bourke's reply was: "3 or 4" (and that is for the day, not per hour let alone per minute). So, check out **Eating at Carnivals**.

Yes, you will have to plan ahead .. pack meals and drinks that reflect your understanding that what you eat has a direct effect on how you perform.

Plan for everything to go wrong (everything you want to be available is unavailable) ..

You are then prepared for every possibility.

Understand that eating is a way of coping with excitement; it is often a nervous reaction: think ... your performance is more than just swimming or running the race.

Is it possible to read newspaper without encountering the concern about escalating obesity?

Be part of the solution, not part of the problem.