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Running and Core Stability **By: Joe Friel**

Recently, I had a great time meeting people, attending some talks and doing a few of my own at the TCR (Triathlon, Cycling and Running) Expo in London. On Sunday, I sat in on a talk by a local physical therapist (called a 'physio' here). He had some great action videos shot of various runners of many different abilities. Each was running barefoot on a treadmill with a view from the back. I wish I had gotten his name and business affiliation but I failed to do so as I got there after the introduction.

The first video he showed was of a sub-2:20 marathoner who had been running for several years. This runner certainly had what could be called 'excessive pronation.' Shortly after footstrike, which appeared to be fairly midfoot, his foot collapsed medially (to the inside) quite a bit. Yet when the video was freeze framed at this point and advanced one frame at a time there was no medial collapse of the knee. In fact, the knee and leg held a straight line from the hip to the ankle. That is unusual for a runner with such an extreme amount of pronation. Maintaining a straight line from hip to ankle means that the core muscles must be quite strong to keep the hip from dropping as the recovery leg swings through. If the hip drops the knee must collapse to maintain balance.

With this runner, again being viewed from the back, the waistline of his shorts remained perfectly horizontal. That was because his core muscles kept everything nicely in place.

So, despite an excessively pronated foot there was no medial or lateral stress being placed on the leg, knee or hip. And, in fact, this athlete reported that he had never been injured despite many years of running.

Another video was presented in which a young female runner was viewed from the back as she ran. Her foot and ankle movement were nearly textbook with the ankle showing only a slight amount of pronation, which is considered 'normal.' However, she reported a significant history of iliotibial band (ITB) injuries. It was obvious why this was the case. As her recovery leg would swing through the hip on that side collapsed and the knee of the support leg buckled in considerably as a result. Going farther up the chain it was evident that her core muscles were quite weak because the waistband on her shorts rocked up and down pivoting around her SI joint region.

The bottom line of his presentation was that the core muscles are at least as critical to running stability and performance as are the feet. He gave an excellent presentation and much food for thought.

Nutrition Periodization by Ben Greenfield

Time to pull out some crazy long syllables. Yes, that's right, it's time to talk about nutrition periodization. When addressing nutrition, the word "periodization" refers to dividing your yearly nutritional plan into several distinct segments that apply to daily, weekly, or monthly cycles of training. While there are many different ways to put together your annual training plan, the basic idea behind nutrition periodization is that your dietary habits should match your training habits, which involves a bit more than a bigger bowl of ice cream after the really hard workout.

Unfortunately, fueling your body for multi-sport training is not as simple as fueling a car. With a car, you simply put fuel in the gas tank when you're running low or when you're prepping for high mileage days. With triathlon, however, you not only have several different physiological systems, or "engines", that you're fueling, but you also have three different types of fuel: fat, protein, and carbs. The key to nutrition periodization is to match the amount and timing of these three fuel types with the volume and intensity of your training (which affect which "engine" you're using).

So you are essentially optimizing carbohydrate intake for glucose and glycogen (my fancy name for "sugar") derived energy systems, optimizing protein intake for lean muscle mass and immune system recovery systems, and optimizing fat intake for long fuel source systems, physiological balance of hormones and other fat dependent functions, like developing your brain (that's right, fat makes you smart). The final key is to manage your body weight (which ultimately affects your power:weight ratio) by adjusting your total caloric intake on days or periods of physical inactivity. Sound complicated? A little bit, but it can't be any worse than disassembling and cleaning your chain ring.

look at a few examples of NP (notice that I'm getting burnt out on syllables and have quit typing the full words), using general terms to describe each period of the multi-sport season.

Base/Foundation training

This is the time of the season when you are laying down the groundwork of aerobic conditioning. Workouts are typically long and intensity fairly low, meaning that you're using quite a bit of fat for fuel, and a good portion of carbohydrates as well. Remember, the lower the intensity, the more fat is used as a fuel for your "low-intensity engine", and the harder you work, the more you turn to carbs as a fuel for your "high-intensity engine". Not a huge amount of speed and force work is taking place, and with this decreased muscle repair demand, protein needs are lower (protein will be used to fuel your "muscle-building engine"). A sample carbohydrate/protein/fat percentage ratio might be about 50% carbs, 20% protein, and 30% fat. We're not talking about dragging a scale into the kitchen - just closing your eyes and imaging no more than half of your day's total intake coming from carbs.

Build/Intensity/Preparation

Your longer, harder efforts are increasing, and you are spending a greater period of time at lactate threshold. Many of your workouts include intervals and high intensity workouts, so dependence on carbohydrate as an energy source is increasing, and use of fat will decrease. Carbs now increase to 65%, protein increases to 15%, and fat drops a bit, down to 20% of total dietary intake. This also a great time to begin practicing your race fueling. Yes, that means you switch from chocolate bars to gels.

Racing/Specialization/Peak

Efforts during this time of season are hardest, and involve difficult, high-intensity lactate threshold, above lactate threshold, and VO2 max efforts. A good deal of time is spent developing power, speed, and strength, which places a high demand on the body for carbohydrate (for high intensity energy) and protein (for muscle recovery). To enhance power:weight ratio, unnecessary amounts of subcutaneous fat should also be kept at a minimum during this phase, meaning your body fat percentage should be the lowest of the year, and your consumption of french fries and peanut butter should strongly correlate to this. Ratios now increase to about 70% carbs, 15% protein, and decrease to 15% fat.

Recuperation/Strength/Recovery

As you transition into the off-season, and focus on goal setting, strength training, and cross-training, carbohydrate and total caloric needs will decrease, while protein will be more necessary for muscle building and recovery. A sample ratio would be back down to 50% carbs, with 25% protein and 25% fat. This doesn't count the part of the off-season in which you go ape nuts on beer kegs, T-bone steaks, and yes, much, much more peanut butter.

The take-away message is this: you don't train the same way, day after day, week after week, month after month - do you? Please say no. Then why would your diet never change to match your fluctuating intensity and volume? Now that you know about nutri - hell, I'm not going to type it again, you know the answer.

Speaking of food, I'd highly recommend that you surf on over to <http://www.bengreenfieldfitness.com>, where I recently released a very valuable podcast (#29) that talks about critters living in your gut. Yes, you heard right. Check it out, you don't want to miss this one...

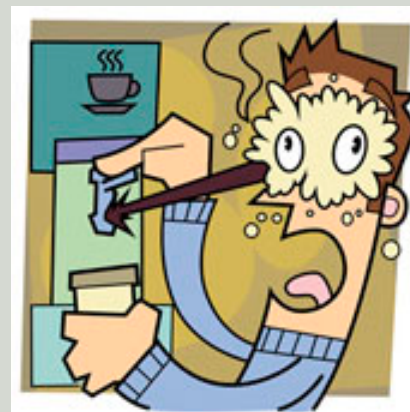
Caffeine and Athletic Performance

By :Christopher D. Jensen

February-04-2009

Caffeine is the kick in your coffee. It gets you up and going in the morning, and helps keep you going when you start dragging. The benefit of a caffeine lift is not lost on athletes. In fact, among some of the world's best endurance athletes — Ironman triathlon competitors — almost three-fourths reported using caffeine to improve athletic performance. And yet many of these same top athletes confess to being unsure about how much caffeine they need for a performance boost, not to mention the caffeine content of common foods and beverages.

Are you up to date on the latest research on caffeine as a performance booster, and do you have a caffeine usage strategy to effectively improve your athletic performance?



Caffeine 101

1,3,7-trimethylxanthine, aka caffeine, is the world's most consumed natural pharmacologic agent. Found in coffee beans, tea leaves, cacao beans (and therefore chocolate), and kola nuts, caffeine consumption is almost unavoidable. Roughly 9 out of every 10 adults in the US consume caffeine, averaging 238 mg every day — the equivalent of 2-3 cups of coffee. Upwards of 20-30% of us consume a whopping 600 mg of caffeine daily. About 71% of our caffeine comes from coffee, 16% from tea, and 12% from soft drinks and energy drinks. And we are not alone. Coffee, which is chock-full of caffeine, is the beverage of choice around the globe.

Why all the fuss about caffeine? It's all about the buzz. Caffeine functions as a mild stimulant: It helps wake us up, and it keeps us going when we might otherwise throw in the towel. No surprise — athletes are very interested in using those qualities to their advantage

Effects vary by sport

The data are pretty convincing that caffeine is effective at improving athletic performance across a number of different sports. It's been shown to improve endurance and time trial performance in cyclists, increase endurance in runners, and improve performance times and boost power in rowers. It's also been shown to improve performance in cycling and running events lasting approximately 5 minutes, and to increase peak power output, speed, and isokinetic strength in sprint and power events lasting less than 10 seconds. Researchers studying tennis players found that caffeine increased hitting accuracy, speed and agility, and overall playing success on the court. And players reported feeling more energy late in their matches.

While the evidence supports a performance-boosting effect of caffeine for a number of sports and events, it doesn't help in all cases. Specifically, caffeine has been shown to have no effect, and may even be a negative factor, in sprint and power events lasting anywhere from 15 seconds to 3 minutes.

How it works

Caffeine has a wide range of effects on the human body; it affects hormonal, metabolic, muscular, cardiovascular, kidney, and respiratory functions. It also influences the central nervous system, where it acts as a stimulant by interfering with the binding of the brain chemical adenosine to its receptors. Adenosine affects nerve cell activity, and it works opposite to caffeine. Where adenosine has a calming effect because it slows the activity of nerve cells, caffeine speeds up the activity of these cells. Thus, caffeine reduces tiredness, increases alertness, improves mood, confers a sense of being energized, enhances concentration, and helps to speed reaction time. Exactly how the hormonal, metabolic, physiologic, and central nervous system effects of caffeine work together to improve athletic performance remains a matter of study. However, one performance benefit in particular stands out: For many athletes, caffeine lowers the perception of the intensity or difficulty of exercise. So, you're able to compete or train at a higher intensity for longer, without actually feeling like you are working harder.

But is it legal?

Because of its ergogenic effects, caffeine at high doses used to be on the list of banned substances for Olympic athletes. But because caffeine confers performance benefits in relatively small amounts and its use is so widespread, the ban was lifted in 2004.

sensitivity

That same stimulant effect that helps propel you through the last few miles of a marathon may actually impair performance for someone who is sensitive to caffeine. For example, in some individuals, almost any amount of caffeine seems to interfere with sleep patterns. This can spell disaster before an important competition, and can also undermine training. Also, if you're caffeine-sensitive, the accompanying jitteriness and anxiety may compound the pre-game jitters you already feel. Headaches, dizziness, and stomachaches are other possible caffeine-related side effects for those who are sensitive to it. So, if you fall into this camp, take a pass on caffeine.

How much caffeine is effective?

Athletes interested in the potential performance-boosting benefits of caffeine are often uncertain about how much caffeine to consume and when to consume it in relation to exercise.

A moderate dose of caffeine is all that's needed. Higher doses are more likely to cause unwanted side effects, and there's no evidence that more caffeine provides greater performance benefits.

The recommended amount of caffeine for performance improvement is in the range of 0.45-1.36 mg caffeine per lb body weight (1-3 mg per kg). For a 150-lb (68-kg) athlete, that equates to a dose of 68-204 mg of caffeine. It's a good idea to use the lowest amount that's effective for you, because, again, more does not mean better. When caffeine intake gets too high, there is an increase in side effects like jitteriness, nervousness, insomnia, headache, dizziness, and gastrointestinal distress, all of which can impair your athletic performance.

Timing of intake in relation to exercise

Caffeine is readily absorbed by your digestive tract. In fact, caffeine concentration in the bloodstream peaks 30-60 minutes after ingestion and stays high for 3-4 hours. On average, about half of it is gone within 4-6 hours, and 75% is cleared within 6-7 hours. So, as a general rule, consuming caffeine about an hour before your event will help to ensure that blood levels are high when you begin competing; your window of opportunity for obtaining a performance benefit from caffeine is probably about 4 hours from the time you consume it.

That being said, you don't need to consume all your caffeine before exercise, especially for longer endurance events. Studies have compared taking a full dose of caffeine an hour before exercise to taking half the dose an hour before and the other half 45 minutes into exercise. Both regimens improved performance times similarly in comparison to a control group. Another study compared taking the full amount of caffeine an hour before exercise to taking the caffeine in divided doses every half hour during exercise. Here again, both regimens improved performance times similarly.

Putting this into practice, if you weigh 150 lbs (68 kg) and require 0.90 mg caffeine per lb body weight (2 mg per kg) for a 3-hour event, the 136 mg of caffeine can be taken all at once about an hour before competing, or it can be taken in divided doses prior to and during the competition.

Tolerance, withdrawal, and your caffeine usage strategy

There's more to the caffeine story than dosage and timing. Caffeine tolerance and withdrawal symptoms need to be considered.

If you're new to caffeine, you'll probably experience a noticeable buzz or jolt the first time you consume a moderate dose. But if you consume that same amount of caffeine every day, after about 5 or 6 days, the stimulant effects are much less obvious. This is because you develop a tolerance or diminished response to caffeine with repeated doses.

The other side of the tolerance coin is withdrawal. Once you grow used to a certain daily intake of caffeine, stopping abruptly can lead to withdrawal symptoms, most commonly, a bad headache. Withdrawal also can have a less obvious, but detrimental, impact on athletic performance. Withdrawal symptoms peak in a day or two, and are usually completely gone within 4-7 days. If you resume caffeine intake in the midst of withdrawal, the symptoms, including headache, usually disappear pretty quickly.

Take caffeine tolerance and withdrawal into consideration when you formulate your caffeine usage strategy:



* If you are a caffeine novice, you can use intense workouts, as you gear up for a dose of 0.45–0.9 mg caffeine per lb (1–2 mg dosage a bit each day to achieve the same

* If you've got a well-established caffeine habit, beware of the unintended withdrawal. For example, this can occur when you're on your way to a competition, stuck in a remote airport with absolutely no coffee to be had anywhere. Unintended withdrawal can also occur when training in hot weather. You'll probably notice the telltale pounding headache. Caffeine withdrawal symptoms can impair your ability to perform during a competition, so be sure to plan ahead and have a caffeine source handy if your usual fix is in short supply.

* If you're a regular caffeine user and you want to optimize the benefits of caffeine ingestion for an important competition, first wean yourself off caffeine gradually over 3–4 days to avoid withdrawal symptoms. Do this about a week before the competition, so you're completely free of any withdrawal effects. Then, once you're off caffeine, resume a moderate intake of 0.45–1.36 mg caffeine per lb (1–3 mg per kg) body weight on the day of your competition. You'll get the desired stimulant effects again, just like a caffeine novice would experience.

* Finally, if the mere thought of tapering your caffeine intake before a competition leaves you dysfunctional, stick with your current regimen, but consume some extra caffeine before and during your event to get an extra kick.

Caffeine sources

Although coffee is the most widely consumed caffeine source, it may not be the best source for improving athletic performance. One reason is that you can never quite be sure what amount of caffeine you're getting in that fresh-brewed cup of java, because of the inherent variability in coffee sources and differences in preparation methods. Another reason is that there may be other factors in coffee that antagonize or impair the performance-boosting effects of caffeine. In a study of treadmill runners, endurance times were improved when athletes were given a standardized dose of caffeine, but not when given that same dose in the form of coffee.

An advantage of the caffeinated energy gels and cola drinks that are often available at aid stations during running events and triathlons is that their caffeine dosages are more uniform and dependable. This can be helpful in ensuring that you get the caffeine dose you know from training to be effective.

The table below provides some idea of the caffeine amounts in typical caffeine sources that athletes rely upon. Beverages are often the most concentrated caffeine sources, but levels can vary considerably from one beverage to the next. Complicating matters is the fact that manufacturers are not required to list on the label the quantity of caffeine in their products. So, if you have a favorite caffeine fix, but aren't too sure how much it's packing, do some searching on the Internet to try to nail down the dosage you are getting.

POWERBAR® GEL energy gels and POWERBAR® GEL BLASTS energy chews are available with or without caffeine. These energy gels and energy chews can be used to help meet your caffeine load in the hour before exercise, or during an event, when you need that extra kick to push you through to the finish.ress symptoms that athletes report. The evidence also suggests that the higher the intensity of exercise, the more disruptive it is to normal digestive processes and the greater your chance of suffering GI distress symptoms.

Although you can't really do much about the mechanical trauma or the physiological changes that occur in the digestive tract in response to exercise, understanding that these factors exist underscores the importance of making adjustments to those causal factors you can control.

Caffeine Source	Serving Size (fl oz)	Caffeine Content (mg/serving)
Cola beverages	12	35-55
Iced tea, instant	12	25-30
Flavored teas	12	30
Tea, brewed	8	40-60
Tea, green	8	15
Hot cocoa	8	15
Coffee, drip	8	115-175
Coffee, brewed	8	80-135
Coffee, instant	8	65-100
Coffee, espresso	2	100
Energy drink	8	80-300 mg
POWERBAR GEL varieties with 1x caffeine: Chocolate, Green Apple, and Strawberry Banana flavors	1 packet	25
POWERBAR GEL varieties with 2x caffeine: Double Latte and Tangerine flavors	1 packet	50
POWERBAR GEL BLASTS energy chews: Cola flavor	6 pieces	50

Practical application

If you'd like to know if caffeine might help to boost your athletic performance, follow these guidelines:

* Don't begin experimenting with caffeine at an important event or competition. Test the impact of caffeine on your performance during a few race-pace training sessions.

* Use the lowest possible amount that is effective for you. More is not necessarily better.

* Keep in mind that you will develop a tolerance to your usual caffeine intake, and there are symptoms associated with sudden caffeine withdrawal. Both of these issues need to be factored into your caffeine usage strategy.

* Remember that caffeine can produce side effects. If you feel uncomfortably jittery, anxious, hyper, or if your heart is racing, dial back your dosage. And if you can't seem to find a caffeine level that leaves you feeling comfortable, skip it entirely. Caffeine doesn't work for everyone.

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Website resource: <http://wilstar.com/caffeine.htm>

Ironman Whatever Lee Gruenfeld has another humorous look at the world of Ironman Published Friday, August 1, 2008

I recently got to thinking about what the plural of "Ironman" might be. "Ironmans" doesn't do it for me. You don't need a lot of explanation there; just say it out loud and you sound like Damon Wayans doing "Men on Movies" on In Living Color.

What about "Ironmen?" Not bad, at first blush, but:

Q: How many Ironmen have you done?

A: Just a few, but they were really nice guys.

You pretty much have to refer to multiples as "Ironman races" or, even better, as "Ironman triathlons." Which leads me to wonder why the adjective "Ironman" is necessarily confined to modification of the noun "triathlon." The word is a perfectly good euphemism for "endurance," so why not extend it to other athletic endeavors? After all, not everybody can swim, bike and run. Some people — and I'm not naming names — can't do any of those things.

In that spirit, I herewith offer the following suggestions=>

Ironman Bowling: Five hundred frames, without pause. One of the cool things about this sport is that, the better you bowl, the fewer balls you have to roll: Knock 'em all down on your first shot and you save yourself a second one. Your score is calculated by subtracting the total of each game from 300 and then adding in the time it took you to play, minus the cost of arm slings and Ben-Gay. You don't have to wait for the pin machine to be ready either: You can use several bowling balls and send them off whenever you're ready, except that there's a twenty-point penalty every time you hit the metal watchamacallit that protects the pins while they're being reset. Three "strikes" (no pun intended) and you're DQ'd. In keeping with time-honored traditions of the conventional version, there will be aid stations serving beer and wings after every ten frames.

Ironman Kayaking: This strictly solo event starts at famed "Dig Me" Beach in Kailua-Kona, wends its way up the Kona Coast and around Kohala Mountain, then continues on to Seattle. Ninety-three thousand large orange buoys (don't bother to check; I did the calculation) evenly spaced every fifty yards will provide course guidance. Clydesdales and Athenas may use two-man kayaks.

Ironman Airplane Pylon Racing: This is the LeMans of air racing, and a sport in which your equipment selection makes a real difference. The P-51 Mustang is the obvious craft of choice, but it's hell to land even when you haven't been flying in tight circles for twenty-four hours without a break. Use of an autopilot is grounds for lifetime disqualification and, to reduce sponsor liability, no spectators are allowed anywhere near the course.

Ironman snowboarding: Racers will start at the summit of Mt. Everest and schuss their way to Lhasa Apso. Last one down is a rotten egg.

Ironman Golf: This is a combination of speed golf and cross-country golf, two well-established sports, if by "well-established" you include "among the community of the mildly insane." Ironman golf consists of a single par-7,901 hole (don't bother to check that one, either), with the tee box situated in Des Moines and the green in Central Park. Your score is comprised of a combination of the number of strokes added to the total number of days required to complete the hole. The specific route taken is up to you, but event organizers suggest that, should you end up playing in from New Jersey anywhere near rush hour, you avoid via the Holland Tunnel and take the George Washington Bridge instead. Participants are advised to exercise extreme caution in executing the final 11,000 yards, especially if you're laying up along Ninth Avenue.

Ironman Hopscotch: Same rules as the time-honored original, but the layout is three miles long. Sponsored by the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons.

Ironman Hot Dog Eating: Competitors in the classic at Coney Island eat as many hot dogs as they can in twelve minutes. In the Ironman version, it's twelve hours. We haven't quite worked out all the rules yet, but serious consideration is being given to waiving the "No Puking" provision.



Skinny Sweets! Marlene Koch, R.D. leads us out of temptation

Published Tuesday, April 8, 2008



It's hard to resist those chocolate bunnies and adorable duck-shaped cakes around Easter. But you might want to reconsider that impulse buy. While we all know most desserts aren't healthy, commercial cakes, pastries and candies can be downright bad for you. Store-bought goodies contain hydrogenated oils, which dramatically raise your risk of heart disease. According to the Mayo Clinic, these oils increase your LDL (bad) cholesterol and decrease your HDL (good) cholesterol. Adding further insult, a piece of frosted cake can contain as much as 18 teaspoons of sugar, which when combined with the 20 teaspoons of added sugars most Americans consume in an average day, far exceeds the 8 teaspoon recommended daily allowance.

But don't despair. You don't have to give up desserts completely. The healthiest way to indulge your sweet tooth is to make tasty treats yourself. "Desserts don't have to be decadent to be satisfying," says Marleen Swanson, M.S., R.D., a nutritionist at Johnson & Wales University. "Creating your own desserts allows you to control the ingredients, which can keep sugar, fat and calories in check."

Simply swap a few key ingredients with healthy alternatives, and reduce the fat and calories without cutting the taste. In this guide, we'll show you how to get rid of the worst health offenders and create delicious, wholesome desserts.

Recipe Cleanup

THE OFFENDER: Fats, commonly found in eggs, butter or lard-based products like Crisco. Most fats are calorically dense at 9 calories per gram. For example, you'll get 7 grams of saturated fat in just one tablespoon of butter.

A study in International Journal of Obesity found that women who consumed large amounts of high-fat, sweet products had a higher BMI, or body mass index, which is an indicator of total body fat.

THE SOLUTION: Seek out recipes that use oil--they are lower in saturated fats. Canola oil contains just 1 gram of saturated fat per tablespoon, and olive oil just 2 grams per tablespoon. Puréed fruits and vegetables, such as apples, prunes, pumpkin or bananas, also make excellent replacements for up to one-half the butter in a recipe. This solution works best in bars or cake-like cookies.

To eliminate the fat calories and cholesterol from eggs, replace each egg with one-quarter cup egg substitute or simply use two egg whites for each whole egg.

THE OFFENDER: Full-fat dairy products. That creamy texture we love comes from saturated fats, known as artery-cloggers. The American Heart Association singles out saturated fat as the main dietary cause of high blood cholesterol.

THE SOLUTION: Leave whole milk to the elementary-school set. Switching to lower-fat or non-fat dairy products reduces about one-third the calories and fat. While non-fat products save substantially more calories and fat, they do not always compare favorably in taste or texture. Try using non-fat dairy products in combination with regular and/or light products for the best results.

Another way to trim the fat is to use cottage cheese as a substitute for cream cheese and sour cream. It not only lowers calories, but boasts more protein and calcium. Place it in a food processor or blender and purée until it's completely smooth.

If you really want to mimic the richness of whole milk or cream, try skim or low-fat evaporated milk or non-fat half & half.

THE OFFENDER: Sugar. With 48 calories per tablespoon, sugar adds nothing but empty calories to a recipe.

THE SOLUTION: Use less sugar than what's called for--up to one-third of the sugar can usually be eliminated with successful results. Another trick to enhance sweetness is to add a touch of cinnamon, vanilla or orange zest to recipes. Use just a pinch and all you'll detect is a hint of sweetness.

You can also replace some or all of the sugar with a sugar substitute. For cooking and baking, be sure to use a sugar substitute that can withstand the required heat without losing its sweetness. Aspartame, commonly sold as NutraSweet or Equal, cannot take prolonged heat; however, sucralose, sold as Splenda, can be used for baking. For cold treats, all sugar substitutes can be used interchangeably to save you unwanted calories.

Marvelous Lemon Mousse

Sweet and luscious, this lemon mousse offers both protein and bone-building calcium.

1 1/2 tsp unflavored gelatin	1/2 cup low-fat cottage cheese
2/3 cup lemon juice	8 oz. non-fat plain yogurt
3/4 cup Splenda	1 egg white
Zest of 1 lemon, finely grated	1 Tbsp sugar
2 drops yellow food coloring (optional)	3/4 cup light whipped topping

Place gelatin in a small saucepan. Add 1/3 cup of the lemon juice and let stand for 3 minutes. Place on low heat and add remaining 1/3 cup of lemon juice, Splenda, zest and food coloring. Heat for 3 to 4 minutes until gelatin is completely dissolved. Transfer mixture to a bowl. Allow to cool while stirring occasionally so mixture does not gel. Purée cottage cheese and yogurt until completely smooth. Whisk purée into the lemon-gelatin mixture. Place mixture in the refrigerator, whisking occasionally to prevent lumps. In a separate bowl, beat the egg white to soft peaks. Add sugar and beat until stiff, but not dry. Fold into the cooled lemon mixture. Fold in light whipped topping. Makes 6 servings.

Nutrition per serving: 102 calories (146 if using sugar), 1.5 grams fat (1 gram saturated), 13 grams carbohydrates (24 grams if using sugar), 0 grams fiber, 9 grams protein, 55 mg sodium

Carrot Cupcakes

With all the flavor of traditional carrot cake, but less than half the calories and a fraction of the added sugar, these gems easily fit in a healthy diet.

3/4 cup all-purpose flour	1/4 cup canola oil
3/4 cup whole-wheat flour	1 small container of baby food: prunes
1 tsp baking soda	1 tsp vanilla
1 tsp baking powder	2/3 cup buttermilk
1 1/2 tsp cinnamon	1/4 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 tsp nutmeg	2/3 cup Splenda or sugar
1/4 cup chopped walnuts	1 Tbsn powdered sugar
1 1/4 cups carrots, peeled, finely shredded	
1/4 cup canola oil	

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spray and flour or place paper liners in 12 muffin cups. In a medium bowl, combine first 8 ingredients (flour through carrots). In small bowl, whisk together the oil, baby food, vanilla, buttermilk, brown sugar and Splenda or sugar. Pour the oil mixture into the flour mixture and stir until combined. Spoon batter into muffin tins, filling 2/3 full. Bake for 16 to 18 minutes, or until center of cupcake springs back when touched. Remove from oven. Dust muffins with powdered sugar just prior to serving. Makes 12 servings.

Nutrition per serving: 161 calories (201 if using sugar), 7 grams fat (0.5 grams saturated), 21 grams carbohydrates (31 grams if using sugar), 2 grams fiber, 3.5 grams protein, 160 mg sodium

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Feb./March Calendar

Training Opportunities:

- Masters Swims @ Northside OZ on Tues @ 6-7:30 pm, & Sun @ 8-9:30 am
- Masters Swims @ Valley OZ on Thurs @ 6-7:30 pm, & Sun @ 8-9:30 am.
- Thursday evenings: Headlamp Run is back at the Gallagher's (619 E. Huron Drive) at 6:30! Watch the Tri Forum for details!
- Saturday am or pm indoor trainer rides or outdoor group rides posted weekly on the forum!
- Many more group training opportunities are posted daily on the Tri Forum... check it out!

Races/Runs:

- **March 7th: 30th Annual Snake River Canyon Half Marathon at Snake River, WA**
 - Also: Leprechaun Scurry at North Idaho College, Cd'A, ID
 - Winter Triathlon in Winthrop, WA
- **March 8th: UBC Triathlon festival in Vancouver, Canada**
- **March 15th: St. Paddy's Five Miler at Spokane Community College, Spokane, WA**
 - Also: Leprechaun Sprint Duathlon in Olympia, WA

Upcoming Events:

Next Social:

- **Saturday, February 28th: Tri Fusion Day at Zi Spa in Coeur d'Alene!**

Next Membership Meeting:

- **March 18th, 2009 @ 6:30 p.m.: General membership meeting at Twigs on the south hill.**
- **Next Kids Club Meeting: Coming soon=> Cycling Event in April! Exact date/time/place will be available in the near future. Keep watching for more details.**