**What does a high carbohydrate diet look like?**

The following diet is suitable for a 70kg athlete aiming to carbohydrate load:

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| Breakfast | 3 cups of low-fibre breakfast cereal with 1&1/2 cups of reduced fat milk 1 medium banana 250ml orange juice |
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| Snack | toasted muffin with honey 500ml sports drink |
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| Lunch | 2 sandwiches (4 slices of bread) with filling as desired 200g tub of low-fat fruit yoghurt 375ml can of soft drink |
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| Snack | banana smoothie made with low-fat milk, banana and honey cereal bar |
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| Dinner | 1 cup of pasta sauce with 2 cups of cooked pasta 3 slices of garlic bread 2 glasses of cordial |
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| Late Snack | toasted muffin and jam 500ml sports drink |

This sample plan provides ~ 14,800 kJ, 630 g carbohydrate, 125 g protein and 60 g fat.

### What are the common mistakes made when carbohydrate loading?

* Carbohydrate loading requires an exercise taper. Athletes can find it difficult to back off training for 1-4 days before competition. Failing to rest will compromise carbohydrate loading.
* Many athletes fail to eat enough carbohydrate. It seems athletes don't have a good understanding of the amount of food required to carbohydrate load. Working with a sports dietitian or using a carbohydrate counter can be useful.
* In order to consume the necessary amount of carbohydrate, it is necessary to cut back on fibre and make use of compact sources of carbohydrate such as sugar, cordial, soft drink, sports drink, jam, honey, jelly and tinned fruit. Athletes who include too many high fibre foods in their carbohydrate loading menu may suffer stomach upset or find the food too bulky to consume.
* Carbohydrate loading will most likely cause body mass to increase by approximately 2kg. This extra weight is due to extra muscle glycogen and water. For some athletes, a fear of weight gain may prevent them from carbohydrate loading adequately.
* Athletes commonly use carbohydrate loading as an excuse to eat everything and anything in sight. Consuming too many high fat foods will make it difficult to consume sufficient carbohydrate. It may also result in gain of body fat. It is important to stick to high-carbohydrate, low-fat foods while carbohydrate loading.