

Fitness Tips



There are times when a ride, walk or run feels difficult from the start.

Perhaps you didn't get a good night's sleep or enough sleep the night before.

Maybe it's because you've had a stressful day behind the desk or in the books. Other times, the struggle sneaks up on you. You started out feeling great, but now you're barely halfway through and you're already looking for reasons to call it quits.

Sound familiar? We've all been there!

As you prepare for your Tour de PIF, call on some of our tried and tested endurance tips, and there's a good chance you'll be feeling strong and confident and ready to compete on the day.

DEVELOP A MANTRA

On those days that seem a little more challenging than usual, having a mantra in your back pocket can make all the difference.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU? WHAT FIRES YOU UP?

Your mantra can be a short phrase such as, "I can and I will!" or "strong, able and smooth" or something similar to a military cadence that was introduced to us during a 25-hour event a few years ago that we like to silently repeat to ourselves when we're gutting it out through a tough workout - whatever works!

ZONE OUT

Do you listen to music when running or riding? Try saving a particular playlist reserved for the toughest sessions, listening to those sacred pump-up songs will feel like a treat. Another mental trick worth trying is to pick a person or landmark in the distance and imagine they or it is pulling you along like a magnet. It sounds odd, but take our word for it, it works!

TAKE A BUDDY

If a particular session is shaping up to be a challenge before you even begin, recruit a buddy to keep you company. They may only join you for a few kilometres, having that extra motivation is critical. If a buddy isn't possible, consider a zoom call over Bluetooth headphones with a friend.

● **USE A REWARD SYSTEM**

Let's say you have 10 km left in your training plan, but you are over it. It's time to reward yourself!

Start thinking of ways to treat yourself once you're done. For example, if you make it another 5 km, shout yourself a coffee. For each additional km, raise the reward – a shot of vanilla syrup or a freshly baked muffin. The promise of a post-run breakfast extravaganza might be all you need to get it done.

● **GOOD NIGHT!**

Getting a good night's sleep isn't just about the hours, it's about getting the highest quality sleep possible. Getting the right amount of quality sleep is the most critical thing you can do for recovery. Even the smallest changes can make a huge difference. Here are some pointers that will help to get you well on your way to Slumberland!

- Start with a good mattress and a comfortable bed.
- Keep a regular sleep schedule, so that you always wake and get up at the same time.
- Set a routine of stretching or reading to relax and wind down in the hour before you hit the hay.
- Lastly, put away the phone, tablet or computer!

● **DISCOVER YOUR INNER YOGI**

Yoga and Running = Yin and Yang of fitness.

The reason? Use yoga to practise balance strength while increasing their range of motion and flexibility.

Consider this, an average runner strikes the ground nearly 650 times in a single kilometre, impacting muscles, joints, tendons and ligaments with each stride.

Regularly practising this ancient art is the perfect for preparing your body. Even one class a week counts!

● **DON'T FORGET TO HYDRATE!**

Hydration is fundamental to boosting recovery, but so often overlooked. The role that hydration plays during exercise is widely accepted; our muscles are actually 75% water, which makes getting enough H₂O, daily, even more vital.

The power of post-workout and daily hydration is key to unlocking optimal performance. H₂O plays a significant role in repairing muscles damaged during exercise.

There are many different opinions on how much water you should be drinking every day. Health authorities recommend about 2 litres per day. When exercising regularly, we should aim to increase this to 3 litres of water each day for peak performance!