

Eating for Performance Series: Ranger School Prep



Staying lethal when conditions and environment change.

Nutrition Leading up to Zero Day

As you prepare for Ranger School putting some intentionality into your nutrition can help you prepare and perform at your best when it matters. Use the tips below to help maximize your training.

90+ days out: Ensure that your foundational nutrition tactics are in place. If you need to lose or gain weight prior to leaving for training it is best done as far out as possible. If you have a history of stress fractures, shin splints, or other bone injury see a dietitian to get vitamin D tested, establish a bone healthy meal plan, and create hydration, sleep, and recovery strategies.

60 days out: If you are ramping up training, add in carbohydrates strategically to enhance recovery and increase the return you get from smart training. Start working with a strength coach to establish a concurrent training program. Avoid training in "hard conditions" that mimic ranger school as this increases risk for injury. Continue establishing solid lifestyle habits (hydration, sleep, etc.).

30 days out: Stabilize weight. Losing or gaining weight during this time may have a significant impact on your performance this close to shipping out. Experiment with hydration and electrolytes to optimize hydration and prep the gut as much as possible.

2 weeks out: Taper. A taper allows the body to recover so that it can "supercompensate" allowing for a higher performance threshold to develop. Time this to coincide with RAP week. Start decreasing your training volume, and slightly increase carbohydrate intake (~60 to 90+ grams per day above usual). Prioritize sleep and hydration. NO ALCOHOL. Start acclimation training.

Hyponatremia

Hyponatremia is a potentially lethal condition that occurs when the body's sodium levels drop too low. This can occur due to water intoxication when more water is taken in than can be excreted which can effect electrolyte concentrations including sodium.

HOW TO DECREASE RISK:

- Do not exceed 1 quart per hour under most conditions
- Consume your entire MRE using the salt and sugar packets
- Consume sports drink powders and electrolytes packets as needed
- Monitor your urine color when possible; it should be pale yellow

<https://www.hprc-online.org/>

Performance Nutrition Recommendations

Carbohydrates: 1.4 grams to 5.5 grams per pound of bodyweight per day

Protein: 0.8 grams to 1 gram per pound of bodyweight per day

Consume your remaining calories from fat (~20 to 25% of Calories). See a registered dietitian for further recommendations.

Carbohydrates are the body's preferred source of fuel and essential to muscle recovery, cognitive performance, reaction time, and physical performance. Aim for 30 to 90 grams of carbohydrate per meal and/or prior to training. It is important to practice proper fueling and loading prior to events.