



Q: Dear Coach: I've heard about gels and energy drinks but have never really trained with them. Will they be helpful to keep up my energy during my first half marathon? I hope to complete it in 2hrs. - Hopeful

A: Dear Hopeful: I recommend carbohydrate loading a few days before the event. By this, I mean eating complex carbohydrates such as wholegrain breads and pastas rather than just lollies! This will help the body store energy as glycogen (the body's fuel for the event).

On race day, the general rule of thumb is a calculation of 1g carbohydrate per kilogram of body weight per hour: 1g carb / kg / hr. The easiest way to take in the carbohydrates, I believe, is with the use of gels. It is a thick, pure carbohydrate, similar to honey. An average gel contains approximately 25 grams of carbohydrate. So for someone who weighs 75 kg, for example, they would need to ingest x3 gels per hour, or once every 20 minutes. Remember, also, to drink water regularly throughout the event as hydration effects energy and performance.

I recommend trialing the gel of your choice before the event during your long running training sessions to make sure that it does not upset your tummy!

I hope this helps, good luck with your race - and let's aim for a 1hr 55min !

Regards, Coach Tim