



Tapering for a Marathon Quick tips

After the months of training have been completed and its only days until your event all that is left before your race is some 'freshening' up. These last 10-14 days can be met with anxiety by runners whom have arranged their life to allow for 1-2 hours of running and other related training in a day. The body's energy starts to come during this tapering period and with that added discipline is needed. Here are quick tips to keep you on the straight and narrow leading into race day assuming your training plan for this period is taken care of.

1. **Schedule:** The body functions well with a schedule and an athlete functions well with limits. Keep the time you wake and go to bed the same during the taper, even if you feel you don't need the same sleep. Resist days with a dramatic sleep-in to avoid lethargy. If you still need rest, nap in an afternoon. Training less during this time can be a chance to take a walk, do some dynamic stretching or yoga. Don't go crazy adding new activities, but keep your body moving. When traveling to a race do your best to maintain the same schedule.
2. **Nutrition:** Eat your way to the start line wisely. Barring the implementation of a depletion period in your diet prior to your event, you should continue to eat well-rounded meals following the USDA's guidelines for appropriate nutrition while accounting for the change in your activity level. If you haven't already done so, determine your RMR and basic daily activity with an online calculator like the one [here](#); then add in the calories lost in running using the simple chart [here](#). This should guide the amount you eat each day to prevent runners from either gaining weight or restricting their caloric intake to the point of inadequate muscle glycogen.
3. **Hydration:** Hydrating the body should be a practice you incorporated into your marathon training up to this point. No need to make changes even for warm weather races, but do develop a day of race strategy for water and nutrition. Remember that you can hydrate the body with all non-caffeinated fluids and water may not always be the best or most enjoyable option.
4. **Travel:** If traveling for your event it is important to unsure success on race day by:
 - a. sticking to your normal schedule. If traveling abroad resist napping and work to get on your race countries time.
 - b. avoid caffeine in flight as the dry and hypobaric cabin environment prove to be a diuretic. Carry a water bottle and strive for 8 ounces an hour.
 - c. keep all race gear and toiletries on your carry on. Just in case.
 - d. pre-arrange any post flight travel and accommodations, including reservations for meals.
5. **Day of race:** See my 'A Plan for Success on Race Day' article for tips on pre and day of race fueling, gear and logistics.

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