Infographics: Winning road cycle races: a Team Sky perspective.


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AND SURROUNDING YOURSELF WITH THE BEST TEAM

TEAM PHILOSOPHY: MARGINAL GAINS = CYCLE OF CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

WINNING ROAD CYCLE RACES
A SPORT MEDICINE PERSPECTIVE

Mediterranean and well-balanced diet

Diet when on-bike
When riding your bike for more than one hour, generally aim for a carbohydrate intake of 60g/hour and use a mixture of water and electrolyte drinks, drinking to thirst.

Hydration
Monitor the colour of your urine to assess your hydration, aiming for a light yellow colour.

Cross training
Do at least one non-bike training session per week. Strength and conditioning work has been shown to improve bike speed and endurance capacity (3), without causing weight gain.

Post-exercise recovery strategies
a. Compression garments.
b. Ice-baths.
c. Post-race massage and stretching.
d. Good quality sleep, aiming for at least 8 hours sleep per night.
e. Good personal hygiene.
f. Appropriate ‘stress’ management.

References


Reducing effects of travel
a. Chewing gum with xylitol e.g. pre-flights, to reduce risk of infections when flying.
b. Stay well-hydrated during the flight, avoiding alcohol, and keep mobile in-flight.
c. Start adjusting to the new time zone before you leave.
d. Compression stockings.
e. Ideally arrive at least one week before the race, to allow your body to adapt to the new time zone and environment, including heat exposure.
f. Consider flight times in relation to training, and racing plans to minimise infection risk to athlete.
g. Review risks of travel in multi-disciplinary team and if any precautions, e.g. travel vaccines, food, water, etc, need to be planned.

Health screening
a. Pre-season medical.
b. Regular blood screen.
c. Vaccinations – influenza, hepatitis A and B, traveller’s diarrhoea.
d. Regular ‘wellbeing’ monitoring via an app.

On-race health monitoring
a. First pass urine osmolality and early morning weight checks to assess hydration.
b. Early morning health screen to detect infections early.

Expert management of common cycling medical issues
a. Infection – commonest reason for being ‘off bike’. For example, for common cold viral infections use zinc lozenges at a dose of 80mg/day started within 24 hours of symptoms and continued for up to 2 weeks.

Anti-doping
a. Education of the athlete around anti-doping issues and ensure they are kept up-to-date on WADA anti-doping guidelines.
b. Knowledge and understanding of the athlete’s biological passport.
c. All athlete medication checked with globaldo.com.

Dietary supplementation
Generally not needed if you have a well-balanced diet but ones to consider with appropriate review:

a. Vitamin D, particularly in winter months.
b. Probiotics.
c. Iron, particularly if considering altitude training.