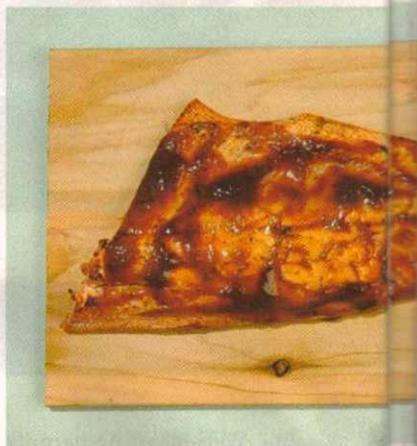


Eat the lunch that makes you feel good.



Don't skip on good fats, like those in salmon.



# fueling a busy fall

**NUTRITION** FOR A JAMPACKED SCHEDULE.

BY LIAM BOYLAN-PETT

A tempo run, a history exam and a dual meet, plus a pasta party, an invitational, a long run and piles of homework. Welcome to a typical week for a high school cross country athlete. It's so busy, it's easy to forget to eat. **1** With the help of Leslie Bonci, the director of sports nutrition at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, and Kelly Jones, a registered dietitian in private practice in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, *Running Times* put together a nutrition guide for high school runners. One rule to keep in mind: Eat the foods that make you feel good when running.

## MONDAY

### Before and After

Lunch period can come at an early hour, like 10:45 a.m. So before that hard workout around 3 p.m., it's important to snack. Otherwise, with fuel stores depleted, the workout will feel harder than it should.

A granola bar and some water right before last period works. Or try a sports drink, which provides calories and fluid.

Be sure to refuel within 15 to 30 minutes after the end of your workout. Bonci says to eat 12–15 grams of protein and 35–50 grams of carbohydrates immediately after a run, plus replace 24 ounces of fluid for every pound lost during a run. Try chocolate milk, trail mix or a sports bar.

## TUESDAY

### Family Dinner

Runners tend to skip on fats, but they should welcome the good kinds, like omega-3s and monounsaturated fats—found in foods like salmon, tuna, avocados, nuts and olive oil. Those foods are important for the immune system, joint health, recovery and injury prevention. Even better for the high school runner: Good fats aid brain function. Try to get the family on board with serving guacamole, fish and nuts. If you're eating 2,000 calories a day, then you'll want about 400 to 500 calories, or about 44 to 55 grams, to be coming from fat.

## WEDNESDAY

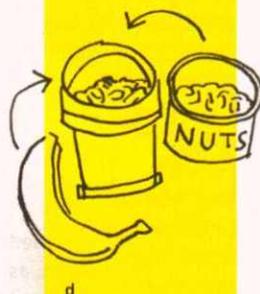
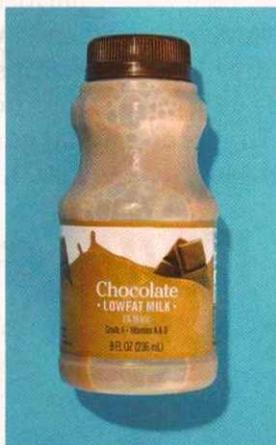
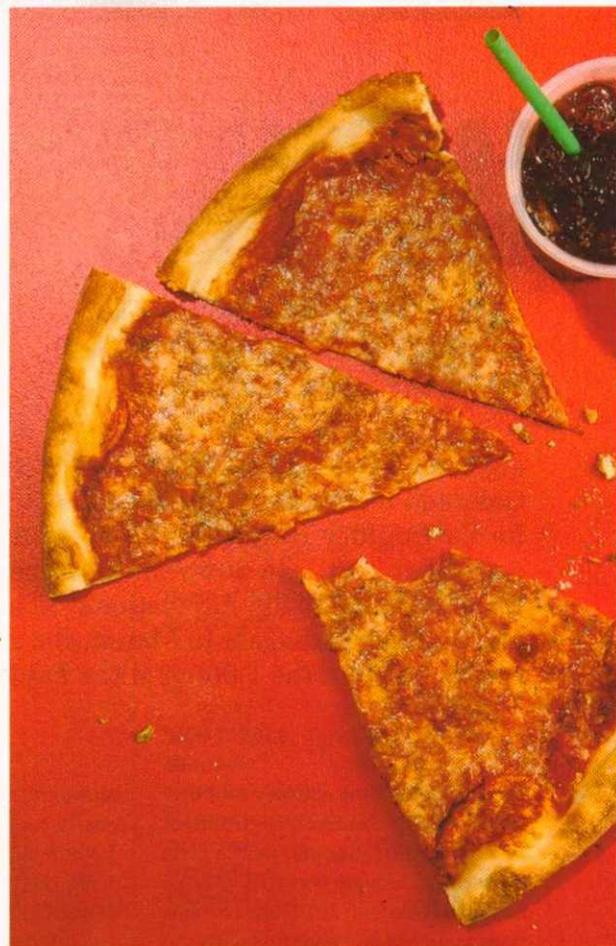
### After-School Racing

Pay attention to nutrition all day before an after-school race. Eat a balanced breakfast that includes carbohydrates and protein. Eggs or oatmeal with a spoonful of nut butter (peanut or almond work) mixed in are great options.

At lunch, a peanut butter and jelly or turkey sandwich gives a balance of carbohydrates and protein and won't feel like a brick in the stomach. Although you may not feel like snacking due to nerves, eating after school is a good plan. Experiment before hard practice days to find what works, whether it's a handful of almonds, a banana, a granola or energy bar. Use that snack on race day.

# HIGH SCHOOL RUNNING

Get carbs and protein at the pasta party.



## THURSDAY

### Caffeine or No Caffeine?

In the midst of a tiring week, a cup of coffee or an energy drink may seem like the perfect option for some extra zip. Tread carefully. Caffeine is known to improve performance in endurance athletes, but it has its downsides: It can give you the jitters, and it can act as a laxative. Remember, the point is to feel good on a run, so if caffeine makes you feel weird, avoid it. If you do like it, experiment to find the right amount that works for you. Rule of thumb: Try not to have more than 200 mg (about two cups of coffee) in a day.

## FRIDAY

### Pasta Party

High school pasta parties have come a long way, as athletes and parents have acknowledged that no one needs a vast store of carbohydrates to fuel a 5K. Aim for variety. Bonci advises dividing the plate into thirds: carbs for speed, protein for strength, and the last third a combination of fruits or vegetables and fat for endurance. For parents and team captains, try to expand on the traditional offerings with a pasta bar that has whole-grain or gluten-free varieties and different types of sauces. Make-your-own pizza with turkey pepperoni and veggie toppings, or even a taco-themed party are fun options.

## SATURDAY

### Invitational Diet

It's easy to skip breakfast when you have to hop on a bus at 6 a.m. for an hour-long ride. But a good breakfast is critical for a solid race performance. If you plan ahead the night before, you can make your morning that much easier by preparing "overnight oats." \* a) Find a thermos and put in a serving of oatmeal. b) Add milk or water. (Alternatives like soy or almond milk work, too.) c) Leave it in the refrigerator overnight. The oats soak in the liquid and have the same gooey texture of cooked oats by morning. d) Add in dried fruit or banana and chopped nuts, then head for the bus, bringing your healthy breakfast with you.

## SUNDAY

### Recover and Reload

If there is a day to cheat on your diet, this is it. Enjoy some pizza or ice cream or any treats that you avoid when you're racing. A little bit of freedom, in moderation, can keep a high school athlete happy—before the routine starts all over again the next day.