

**Advice for The Last Two Weeks Before a Marathon:
Provided by Cork Athletics Webmaster**

Speedwork:

Cut down on intensity and/or volume.

Long Run & Speedwork

Long run two weeks before event: 15 max - EASY!!! pace.

DON'T be tempted to do any last minute long runs or strenuous speedwork in the last two weeks, but particularly in the final week. You CAN'T do too little....but you CAN do too much. The last two weeks are for tapering and building up glycogen stores in the body.

Do too much now and you'll blow your full potential!

Mon/Tues of last week before event: last speed work - light speed session, holding back or 2 miles med/hard but not all out.

Any heavy work in the last 10 days will do you damage. It's hard to do too little but you can very easily do too much!!

Fluids

For the last 10 days(before the event) or so, get plenty of fluids on board. Drink WATER often, several times a day - more than normal. By Fri/Sat week, you need literally to have to get up during the night to get rid of excess.

Excuse the detail: your aim (no pun intended) is light-straw coloured urine at all times (this is the acid test) [not uric acid <grin>]. If you drink a lot in one go, it will become clear but will return to "normal" after some time (12-24 hours) Proper hydration will keep it clear all the time. Binge drinking water/fluids may flush out the electrolytes from your system, making fatigue and cramp more likely. Drink little and often - allow your system to find its natural equilibrium.

Drink:

Alcohol - will dehydrate you - go easy for the last 4 or 5 days, particularly last 2 days (too little time to flush system & rehydrate fully).

Soft drinks - too much will deplete your potassium levels.

Apparently even a 2% deficit in hydration levels will have a HUGE detrimental effect on performance.

DON'T overdo the hydration - you may flush out the electrolytes, leading to cramp. Start your Marathon hydration regime four to six days before the event and try to drink, a little, regularly, rather than a lot in one go.

Carbo Depletion/Loading

Depletion - cutting out/down on carbohydrate for 3-4 days - Probably not a good idea - tried it once. Current wisdom is against it.

Carbo Loading

Definitely a good idea - Will be less effective if you don't hydrate **AND** get plenty of vitamin C on board. For the last 4 days or so get PLENTY of carbohydrates in - substitute carbos for protein.

Protein

Burns dirty. Eat very little protein in last 24 to 36 hours, same goes for high fibre foods, otherwise you will probably need to stop for a (p)it stop in the first 10 miles or so.