

Macmillan and Edinburgh Napier University combine on a winning formula

In the lead up to the Edinburgh Marathon Festival, superstitions and preparation tips for the 26.2 and 13.1-mile race are hotly debated. Luckily for marathon runners, Macmillan Cancer Support has enlisted the help of Edinburgh Napier University sport scientists to come up with a fail-safe formula for marathon success that solves the discussion once and for all.

5C(kg/bm) + 1.5P(kg/bm) + H2O + (5-10hr)S – I – SD = Marathon success

The formula, devised by Professor Anna Campbell MBE, exercise advisor to Macmillan Cancer Support, and her team of sport science specialists at Edinburgh Napier University, provides the ultimate guide to food intake, hydration, sleep, illness and mental preparation in the week before the marathon, which takes place in less than a month on Sunday 26th May.



The formula explained:

5C(kg/bm) + 1.5P(kg/bm) – In the week before a Marathon, runners' daily consumption should include 5g of carbohydrate per kilogram of body mass – **5C(kg/bm)** – and 1.5g of protein per kilogram of body mass – **1.5P(kg/bm)** – to preserve energy stores in the muscles, keep hunger levels low throughout the race and prepare the body for muscle repair.

H2O – It is prescribed that runners hydrate little and often, or consume 500-600ml of water 2hrs before exercise. **Professor Anna Campbell** says, *“Both drinking too much and too little water can be harmful to health. A good indicator is that if your urine is straw coloured, you need some more fluid”*.

(5-10hr)S – The experts recommend that runners don't make any drastic changes to their normal sleep pattern, ensuring they get at least 5 hours sleep and no more than 10 hours sleep per night.

I – SD – To complete the perfect pre-marathon week formula, Professor Campbell and her team propose that runners should ward off illness (**I**) by avoiding crowded areas where possible, trying not to touch their mouth and eyes, and washing hands

before meals.

For mental preparation, side-lining self-doubt (**SD**) is key. **Dr Lesley Ingram**, sport science lecturer at Edinburgh Napier University says, *“All the hard miles are in the bag and one more long run will not help you here”*.



The formula has been commissioned by Macmillan to support its marathon runners, who fundraise to help the charity provide practical, emotional and financial support to the 2.5 million people living with cancer in the UK.

We're here to help you find your best way through and live life as fully as you can.

Call us free on 0808 808 00 00 or visit [macmillan.org.uk](https://www.macmillan.org.uk)

MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT

Michelle Campbell, Fundraising Manager in Scotland for Macmillan Cancer Support said: *“We're so grateful to all our runners taking on the Edinburgh Marathon challenge and wish them the best of luck for race day. Macmillan is almost entirely funded by donations and without the incredible Team*

Macmillan runners and their fundraising efforts, we simply cannot be right there with the growing number of people living with cancer”.

Commenting, Professor Anna Campbell said:*“The week before a Marathon is a crucial time for all runners, not just to reach their fundraising targets, but to complete those final preparations for the 26.2mile challenge ahead of them. We hope our formula will help reduce the ‘mara-noia’ ahead of the big day!”*

The Edinburgh Marathon Festival is Scotland’s largest running event which will see thousands of runners putting on their running shoes in the capital. Last year Macmillan raised over £580,000 in the one weekend as thousands of runner put on the green Macmillan t-shirt.

One runner who is preparing for the challenge is Jack Brodie from Edinburgh. Jack was 16 when he was originally diagnosed with skin cancer, however after a successful operation and subsequent treatment he was told that he was cancer free. Since getting the all clear Jack has been touring Scotland giving talks to schools alongside the Macmillan nurse who was there with him during his diagnosis.

Jack said:“For me, the days with cancer will never end and I will always be attached to it in some way, or another. I still remember the beige walls in the doctor’s office when I was given the gut wrenching diagnosis.

“Macmillan were there with every step of the way from my diagnosis and I maintain being friends my Macmillan nurse.

“My diagnosis completely changed my life and the lives of those around me. Having seen the affect the disease has, I’ll be running for the others affected by cancer.”

The Edinburgh Napier University experts have also provided race day tips to make sure runners are supported all the way

to the finish line:

- **Control the controllables** – wear kit and trainers you're comfortable in and use planned nutrition strategies rather than trying new foods or energy drinks
- **Don't focus on things that are out of your hands** – like the weather and other runners
- **Feed off the crowd** – use the energy of the crowd to keep you going mentally
- **After the race** – eat a well-balanced meal within two hours of finishing, keep hydrated and, most importantly, avoid the stairs!

