

HUNGER STUDY FEEDS RESEARCH

NEW FINDINGS SUGGEST THERE COULD BE A LINK BETWEEN THE TYPE OF TRAINING YOU DO AND YOUR APPETITE

EVER WONDERED why you're starving after a short swim but have to force down dinner after an intense 10km bike ride or run? New research, led by Dr David Stensel from Loughborough University, goes some way to explaining why.

In the study, published in *The American Journal of Physiology – Regulatory, Integrative and Comparative Physiology*, researchers looked at two specific hormones and measured their response to different forms of exercise. The study proved a link between your choice of exercise and your appetite – with some startling results for triathletes.

Results show that after a vigorous run (at more than 70 per cent of VO₂ max) there is a significant reduction in the body's ghrelin levels – the only known appetite stimulant – and an increase in peptide yy levels – an appetite suppressant. This explains why some runners don't feel like eating for a number of hours after training,

and Stensel says the effect could even give you an advantage during the bike and run.

"It makes sense in endurance events like triathlon and running that you want your mass to be as light as possible," he says. "Therefore it may be possible that repeated bouts of high-intensity aerobic exercise can help achieve this by reducing your ghrelin levels and with it, your appetite."

Swimmers buck trend

Although initial results show appetite suppression after hard running, swimmers experienced the opposite effect and reported an increased appetite after a session in the pool.

This difference could be due to a number of reasons. Cool water temperature may mean more energy is expended keeping the body warm. There's also a possibility that the unique repetitive, jarring action of running – not a feature of swimming or cycling – may

disturb the secretion of hormones that act to suppress our appetite.

Force feeding

Stensel says if the study's results are replicated it could mean triathletes need to ignore their hunger signals and eat even when they're not hungry. "On very long triathlons such as Ironman, even in the heavy training that's done by triathletes, there could be issues trying to get sufficient fuel into the body – the opposite problem that most people have."

Stensel stresses that the findings are far from conclusive and more work needs to be done, particularly looking at actual food intake after exercise in addition to the hormonal changes. The next phase of the research will be to investigate whether certain types of exercise can cause specific cravings, which could help triathletes work out which foods will be most appealing during long, hard races.

TRI TRICK SQUATS



Illustration © Anne Cakebread

Single-leg squats are one of the most effective sport-specific conditioning exercises that you can do. This exercise builds strength and size, along with stability. Stand three feet in front of a bench and place the top of one foot on the bench behind you. Looking straight ahead with your chest up, lower your body with your hips thrown back until your upper thigh is parallel to the floor, then push yourself back up again. Start with 3x8 reps, then increase as you get stronger, with variations of speed.

Spitting distance

ENDURANCE ATHLETES CAN BENEFIT FROM JUST TASTING SPORTS DRINKS

Exercise might affect your appetite, but research shows that consuming sports fuel might be no more effective than just tasting it and spitting it out. A study from the University of Birmingham and Manchester Metropolitan University suggests that swilling a sports drink without swallowing

could improve your performance. Researchers gave a small group of endurance cyclists drinks containing glucose, maltodextrin or artificial sweeteners. All the drinks tasted the same. Those with the glucose were one minute faster in a cycle test than those with just the artificial sweetener, while

those who had the maltodextrin drink were two minutes faster. Scans on the participants showed that the glucose and maltodextrin drinks sent pleasure signals to the brain, which the artificially sweetened drinks did not, affecting their perception of how hard the workout was and helping them to cycle faster.



Just swilling a carbohydrate drink could help performance

Photo © Frank Wechse/triatlon.org

> **SAILFISH** ARE HOLDING WETSUIT TRY OUT SESSIONS. CALL 07841 261609