



## THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA MEDICAL CENTER

El Tour's Official Health & Wellness Advisor



### Training Tips

**Each year thousands of cyclists of all experience levels join together in Tucson for one of the nation's most popular century rides. Unfortunate injuries occur each year, and some of these injuries may be avoided with proper training and preparation. Here are some tips to help make your training and participation more enjoyable and safe.**

- **Proper equipment:** As with any cycling activity it's important to begin with proper personal protective equipment including a well-fitting helmet, cycling gloves, and a good pair of sunglasses. Quality bike shorts and anti-chafing lube such as Body Glide can prevent skin irritation. Visit a local shop and have them perform a bike fit and a tune-up during your training and a few weeks before the ride.
- **Training:** Ramp up your training. Gradually increase the mileage and a time spent on your bike as you get closer to the event. Ideally you should be riding 80- 85% of the length of the event about 2 weeks beforehand. Practice riding in a group to get used to pace changes, communication on the bike, and obstacle avoidance. Pointing out obstacles to those behind you can prevent crashes. Stay alert.
- **Nutrition:** Replace roughly 300 calories per hour with food, bars, or if unavoidable - gels. It is important to also train with proper nutrition to understand how your body reacts to different calorie sources. Some gels can cause an upset stomach due to the osmotic effect of drawing water into your stomach to dilute the thick gel. Use the same nutrition that you trained with on the day of the event.
- **Hydration:** Drink a minimum of 1 bottle per hour to account for respiration and perspiration loss. Electrolyte replacement is key to avoid cramping caused by calcium and sodium loss in sweat.
- **Clothing:** The event starts chilly and ends warm so dress in layers and be prepared to shed clothing as the day warms up. Don't forget to apply sunscreen before your layers so your skin is protected come noontime.
- **Exercise off the bike:** Cross-train with impact loading activity ie. jumping or running to promote healthy, strong bones. Cyclists are known to have relatively weaker bones compared to other athletes because of the lack of impact loading on the bike.

Have a safe  
and enjoyable ride.



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and  
sports medicine:**

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