

→ WINTER FITNESS ISSUE ←

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FEBRUARY 2009

Great Abs

15-Minute Workouts

That'll Make You Strong and Fast

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FOODS EVERY RUNNER SHOULD EAT

(And Proof You Need More Chocolate)

ENDURANCE SPECIAL

Why Older Does Not Mean Slower

+ **10 TIPS** For Surviving Tough Runs

BEGINNERS
RUN MORE,
STRESS LESS

BACK PAIN?
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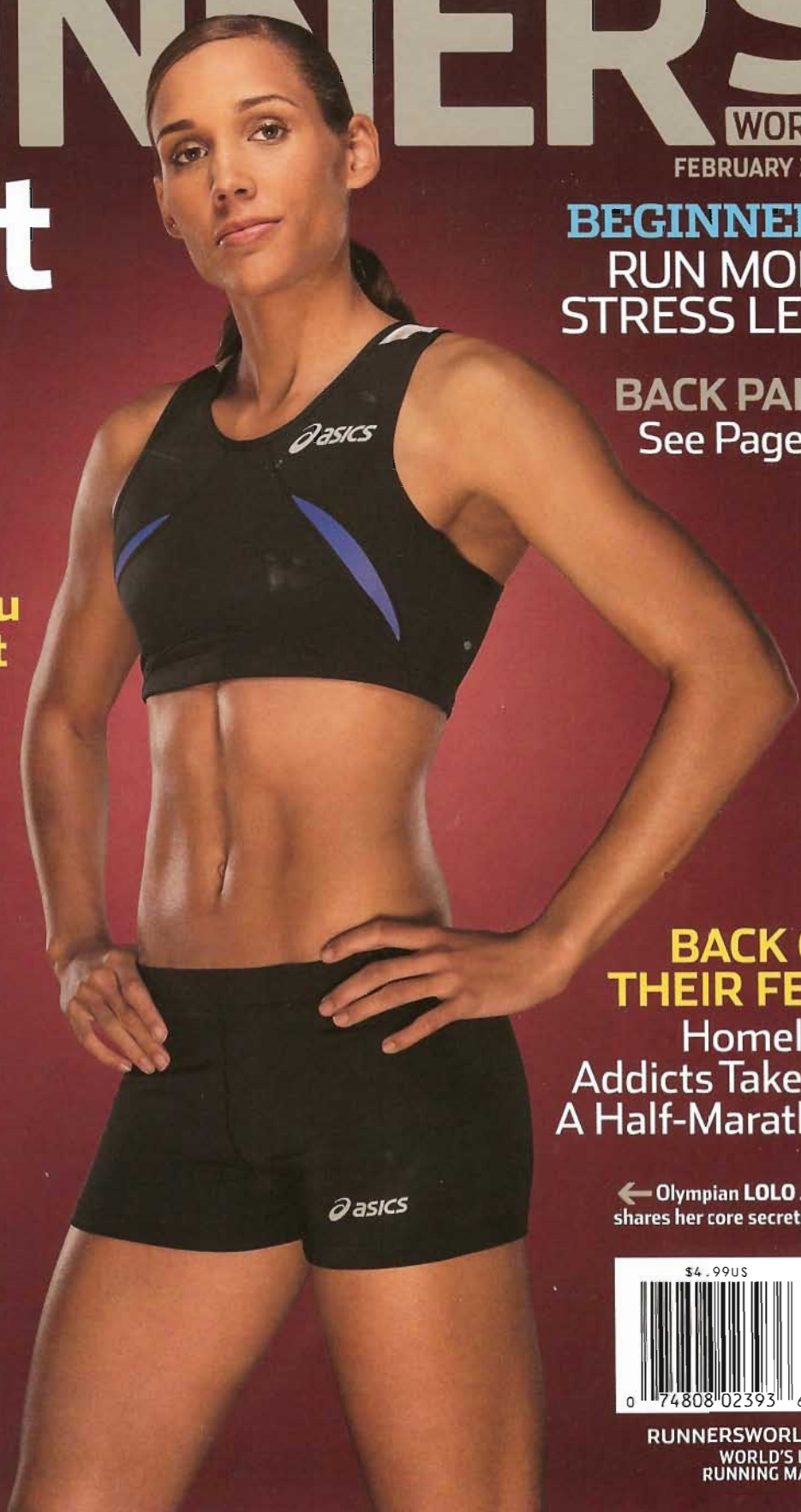
BACK ON THEIR FEET

Homeless Addicts Take On A Half-Marathon

← Olympian **LOLO JONES** shares her core secrets (p. 52)



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GIFT OF HEALTH
Lots of delicious foods contain nutrients that benefit your heart.

Good-Hearted

Protect your ticker by choosing healthy fats, fiber, and vitamin-rich foods **BY YISHANE LEE**

AS A HEALTH-CONSCIOUS runner, you consistently log your weekly mileage, take the stairs when you can, and forgo the side of bacon more often than not. Even so, your healthy habits don't guarantee immunity from the nation's top killer. Heart disease and related conditions, including stroke and heart attack, cause 40 percent of American deaths. That's more than all cancers combined.

The good news? Research has shown that sticking with a healthy diet and regular exercise are among the most effective

lifestyle choices you can make to keep your arteries pliable and unclogged. As a runner, you've already got the exercise part down. Here's how to tweak your diet to include foods with key nutrients that can help keep your heart beating strong.

HEART SMART OATMEAL AND STRAWBERRIES

Whole grains and fruit, such as oatmeal and strawberries, are excellent sources of dietary fiber. A study published last year examined 1,300 men over 40 years and

concluded that for every additional 10 grams of fiber you eat per day, you reduce your risk of heart disease-related death by 17 percent. Soluble fiber is particularly important for heart health because it lowers LDL, so-called "bad cholesterol," and flushes it from your system. Insoluble fiber helps move food through the digestive system. Both are important jobs, so "you want to be sure to get a mix of

Columbia University researchers discovered that LDL levels dropped more than 5% for those who added three grams of soluble fiber to their diet for six weeks.

EAT BETTER

both,” says Sharon Richter, R.D., a New York City–based dietitian who works with ultramarathoners.

HOW MUCH 25 to 30 grams of fiber daily. Most Americans get about half of that.

OTHER SOURCES Both soluble and insoluble fiber are found in all whole grains, beans, fruits, and vegetables.

HEART SMART SALMON

Fatty fish like salmon should be in every runner’s diet. It’s one of the best sources of omega-3 fatty acids—the powerhouses of polyunsaturated fats. Not only do omega-3s reduce “bad” LDL levels while increasing “good” HDL, but they protect against arrhythmic heartbeats, which can lead to sudden cardiac death. They also keep arteries flexible, regulate blood pressure, and reduce triglycerides (a form of fat) in the blood. Runners in particular can benefit from omega-3s: They fight inflammation, including joint pain, and in a 2008 study at the University of California, researchers found that omega-3 fatty acids can increase oxygen delivery during exercise.

HOW MUCH Eat fatty fish (like salmon and tuna) at least twice a week.

OTHER SOURCES Fish is the most potent source, but walnuts, flaxseeds, and canola oil are good vegetarian options, says Elaine Magee, R.D., author of several nutrition books including *Food Synergy*.

HEART SMART AVOCADOS, OLIVE OIL, AND ALMONDS

Avoiding these foods because of their high fat content means you miss out on heart-healthy nutrients. “You should replace bad fats with the good,” says Richter. Pass on heart-clogging saturated fats (in fatty meats, poultry skin, and cream) and trans fats (in shortening and stick margarine), and choose unsaturated kinds, which include poly- and monounsaturated (avocados, almonds, and olive oil are rich in the latter). Studies show that when monounsaturated fat replaces saturated or trans fats, it increases levels of “good” HDL, which sweeps the “bad” LDL to the liver, filtering it out.

HOW MUCH “A typical diet should be no more than 30 percent fat—and

mostly unsaturated sources,” says Richter.

OTHER SOURCES Nuts; pumpkin and sunflower seeds; liquid vegetable oils.

HEART SMART RED WINE

According to a 2001 article in the journal *Circulation*, more than 100 studies have shown there’s an inverse relationship between drinking moderately and heart attack, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases—reducing heart disease risk by 25 to 40 percent. Various studies have found that alcohol helps prevent artery damage caused by LDL, inhibits blood clots, and raises HDL levels. The additional antioxidants in red wine make it a smart choice. “Its color comes from grape skins, which contain resveratrol,” says Richter. In lab studies, resveratrol appears to stop the arteries from getting blocked by fatty deposits.

HOW MUCH Moderation is key. “That means one drink for women, two drinks for men a day,” says Richter.

OTHER SOURCES All alcohol has heart-healthy benefits, including spirits and beer.

HEART SMART COLD CEREAL

Many cereals are fortified with the B vitamins folic acid, B₆, and B₁₂, which break down homocysteine in the blood. Some research suggests this trio may reduce heart-disease risk because high levels of homocysteine, an amino acid, can damage blood-vessel walls. “There’s a well-established association between high levels of homocysteine and coronary risk,” says Riska Platt, R.D., a spokesperson for the American Heart Association. While two recent studies in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* found the B vitamins had no effect on coronary disease, “the jury is still out,” says Platt. “We’ll have to wait for more research to better understand if lowering homocysteine can in turn help reduce heart-disease risk.”

HOW MUCH 100 percent of your DV (get it in a bowl of Kashi Heart to Heart cereal).

OTHER SOURCES Folic acid and B₆ are in leafy vegetables, lentils, and nuts. Fish, poultry, meat, and dairy supply B₁₂. [www](#)

Road Tested

Warm up after cold winter runs with hot recovery drinks



Clif Shot Recovery Hot Chocolate

WHAT’S IN IT 140 calories, 23 g carbs, 1.5 g fat, 6 g protein

WHAT’S GOOD Carbs

and protein replenish glycogen and repair muscles, says Beth Jauquet, a nutritionist in Denver. [clifbar.com](#)



Tazo Chai Black Tea Concentrate

WHAT’S IN IT 200 calories; 44 g carbs; 0 g fat; 8 g protein

WHAT’S GOOD Testers

loved this spicy tea mixed with milk. Research shows caffeine boosts glycogen absorption. [tazo.com](#)



Grande Starbucks's Nonfat Caffé Latte

WHAT’S IN IT 130 calories; 19 g carbs; 0 g fat; 13 g protein

WHAT’S GOOD Delicious

espresso with milk provides more protein for muscle recovery than the other drinks. “Eat a bar for more carbs,” says Jauquet. [starbucks.com](#)



Clif Shot Electrolyte Replacement Drink Hot Apple Cider

WHAT’S IN IT 150 calories, 38 g carbs, 0 g fat, 0 g protein

WHAT’S GOOD Salty and tart, it replaces electrolytes. The green-tea extract protects against oxidative damage. [clifbar.com](#) —LEAH NASH