



Nourish to Finish

Edition 2: Running & RED-S

As runners, we spend a lot of time focusing on training plans, mileage and race-day goals. Yet one of the biggest factors affecting performance is often overlooked: whether we're eating enough to support our training.

Many runners assume that feeling tired, struggling to recover or experiencing a dip in performance is simply part of training harder. In reality, what appears to be overtraining may sometimes be under-fuelling.

This is where Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport (RED-S) comes in.

What is RED-S?

RED-S occurs when the body does not receive enough energy (calories) to support both exercise and normal day-to-day bodily functions. This state is known as low energy availability.

When energy intake is too low for an extended period, the body begins to prioritise survival over performance. To conserve energy, it reduces functions that are not essential for immediate survival. As a result, multiple body systems can be affected, including bone health, hormones, metabolism, immunity and athletic performance.



Importantly, RED-S is not limited to elite athletes. Recreational runners can be just as vulnerable.

RED-S can affect male athletes, too. Most symptoms are the same (including hormone changes in males) but can be more difficult to recognise in males.

Why Are Runners at Risk?

Running can significantly increase daily energy requirements, especially when training for longer distances. However, busy schedules, restrictive diets, weight-loss goals and "clean eating" trends can make it difficult to eat enough to support training.

Many runners unintentionally under-fuel by skipping meals, avoiding carbohydrates or failing to refuel properly after exercise. Social media often promotes leanness and restrictive eating patterns, creating the impression that lighter is always better. Unfortunately, this can result in runners training like athletes without eating like athletes.

Over time, this can lead to low energy availability and increase the risk of RED-S.

Warning Signs to Be Aware of

RED-S often develops gradually, making it easy to miss. Common warning signs, *in context*, include:



For female runners, menstrual changes are particularly important. Irregular periods, missed periods (amenorrhoea) or changes in cycle patterns can be signs that the body is not receiving enough energy.

Why It Matters

One of the most concerning consequences of RED-S is its impact on bone health. Chronic under-fuelling can reduce bone mineral density and increase the risk of stress fractures.

RED-S may also affect hormone function, immunity, recovery and overall wellbeing. Ironically, many athletes who eat less in an attempt to improve performance often experience poorer training adaptations, slower recovery and declining performance.

In short, under-fuelling can make it more difficult, not easier, to reach your running goals.

Food Is Fuel

Nutrition is one of the most powerful performance tools available to runners.

Carbohydrates are the body's preferred fuel source during running and are essential for both performance and recovery. Consistently training with low carbohydrate availability can impair recovery and reduce training quality.

Protein supports muscle repair and adaptation, while healthy fats play an important role in hormone production and overall health.

Runners should also pay attention to **key micronutrients** such as:



Iron

essential for oxygen transport and energy production



Calcium & Vitamin D

important for bone health



Vitamin B12 & Magnesium

involved in energy metabolism and muscle function



The goal is not simply to eat less, but to match your nutrition to your training load.

What does the research show?



As part of my Master's research in 2022, I investigated female endurance runners in Johannesburg who were training at least three times per week.

The findings were striking:

- 81% of participants were classified as being at moderate risk of RED-S.
- Most runners were in a negative energy balance.
- Low carbohydrate intake was common.
- Iron deficiency was identified in several participants.
- Menstrual irregularities and injury histories were frequently reported.
- Many participants were unaware that their nutrition intake was not matching the demands of their training.

The study highlights how common under-fuelling can be, even among committed recreational runners.

A Quick Self-Check

Ask yourself the following questions regularly throughout your training:

- ☒ **Do I eat before key training sessions?**
- ☒ **Do I refuel after my runs?**
- ☒ **Am I eating enough carbohydrates for my training load?**
- ☒ **Is my menstrual cycle regular?**
- ☒ **Am I recovering well between sessions?**

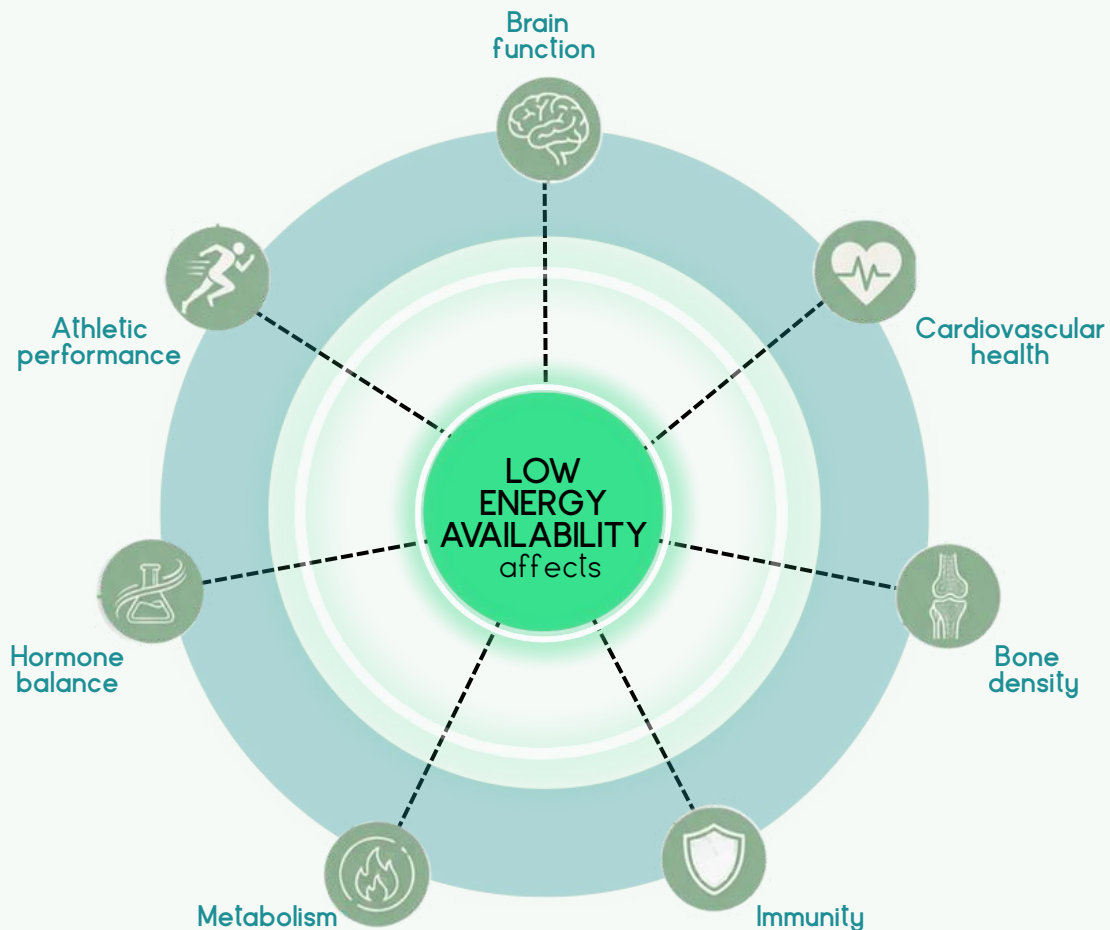
If you answered "no" to several of these questions, it may be worth taking a closer look at your nutrition.

The 'Doggy Bag' – A Take-Home Message on Nutrition

You cannot out-train under-fuelling.

RED-S is common, often overlooked and can affect runners at every level. Recognising the warning signs early and ensuring adequate nutrition can help protect your health, improve recovery and support long-term performance.

Remember: food is fuel, recovery is part of training, and your menstrual cycle is a vital sign.



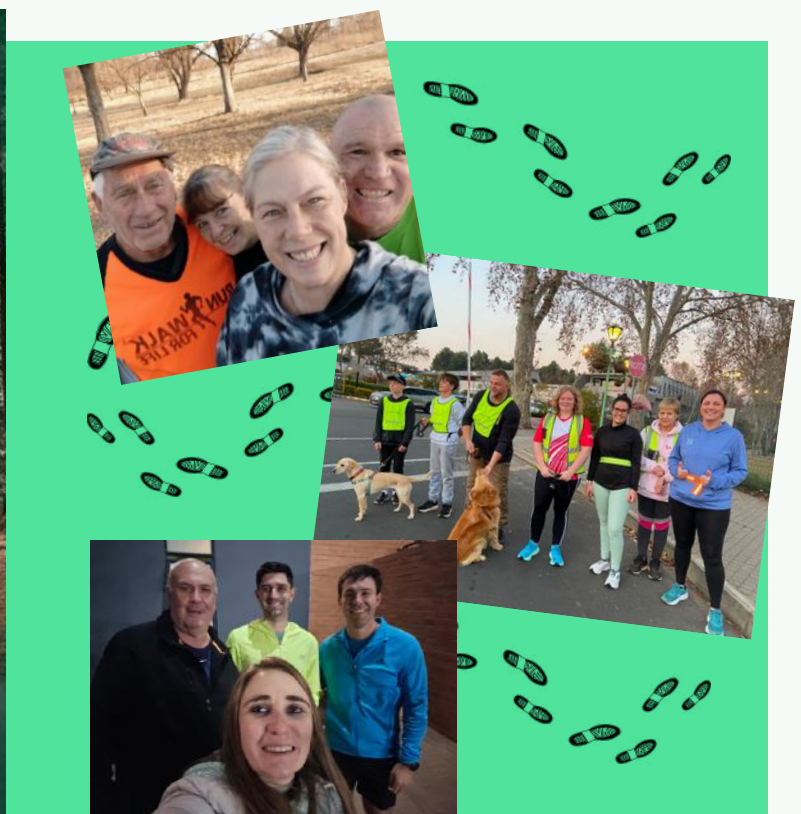
Hi everyone! I'm Marizanne,

a final-year medical student, qualified radiographer and Master's graduate in Sports Medicine with a passion for endurance sport and all things running.

When I'm not studying or in the hospital, you'll usually find me out on the road, training. Over the years, I've completed multiple marathons and ultra-marathons, including the iconic Two Oceans and Comrades Marathons - experiences that have deepened my interest in the science behind performance, nutrition and recovery.

Whether I'm training for my next event, studying or working in the hospital, I'm fascinated by the connection between health, performance, and endurance. Through 'Nourish to Finish', I'll be sharing practical, evidence-based insights on topics such as sports nutrition, hydration, recovery, training and the latest research relevant to runners.

My goal is to translate the science into information that is easy to understand and useful for runners of all levels, helping you make informed decisions and get the most out of your running journey.



Since launching on the 30th of June, our Winter Walkers have been consistently showing up and getting active! We've enjoyed an average of ten participants joining us for Tuesday time trials, Wednesday nature walks, and Saturday morning strolls, making each session an enjoyable experience.

Are you still interested in joining our lively group? The fun is far from over! You can participate until the end of August, and be sure to stay tuned for the next thrilling development in this initiative.

Save the Date

Join us for a special time trial on
Tuesday, 4 August
honouring the wonderful women of our club!

Come dressed in **pink**, **red**, or **purple** to show your support.

After your run, enjoy a delicious cupcake as a sweet treat.



The Glow Lab has generously sponsored a selection of fabulous products for our ladies to win!

To stand a chance of winning, arrive a little earlier before the run, write your name down, and you'll be entered into our lucky draw.

Winners will be randomly selected before we start the time trial.

Kudos Corner



2

1

3

Bradley Diamond



**GERALD FOX 10KM:
SUB-50 PB & 8TH IN AGE
CATEGORY**

Jenny & Patrick Moore



**BIG RED BARN NIGHT RUN:
PATRICK: 1ST PLACE IN 10KM
JENNY: 1ST PLACE IN 5KM**

Barry Chapman



**GERALD FOX 10KM:
2ND PLACE MASTER**

Gavin Maile



**WEEKLY SANDTON TIME TRIAL:
CONSISTENT IMPROVEMENT &
NEW TT PERSONAL BEST**

NJ Kirkby



**GERALD FOX 10KM:
10KM PB & 4TH IN AGE
CATEGORY**

Albert Kangor



**RANDBURG HARRIERS 21KM:
3RD PLACE OVERALL & 1ST IN
AGE CATEGORY**

Have you got something to brag about? Want to celebrate a fellow athlete?

Whether it's running your first race or finishing on a podium, we'd love to **SHOUT OUT** your - or your friends' - victories in our newsletter.

Please note:

- Submissions are exclusive to Nedbank CG members (full membership and social membership).
- You must provide a clear photograph of the athlete at the event in question.
- Your submission must be accompanied by a link to official results (Strava or official event timers) where your claim can be verified.
- Submissions made before the 25th of the month will be included in that month's newsletter. Any later submissions will be included the following month.

*Click here
to submit
your brag!*



**COME RUN
WITH US.**



Join Nedbank Central Gauteng by either clicking the below link or scanning the QR code NOW:

www.nedbankrunningclub.co.za

Scan HERE

**One Club
Two Venues**

*Modderfontein
& Sandton*

Make the most of your membership by joining our weekly runs at both venues, or either, at your convenience!

**1 CLUB
2 VENUES** **SANDTON**
WEEKLY SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY

Weekly time trial

Poplar on Park, Sandton - 17:15

Meet in the parking area for registration & briefing.
Run starts at 17:30



THURSDAY

Hill/Speed sessions

Poplar on Park, Sandton - 17:15

Meet in the parking area for registration & briefing.
Run starts at 17:30



SUNDAY

Weekend long run

Poplar on Park, Sandton - 06:30

Routes, venues & distances shared on WhatsApp group the Friday before.
Meet at 06:15 for registration & briefing.
Run starts at 06:30



STRAVA ROUTES:

TAP TO OPEN

3KM

5KM

8KM



TAP TO OPEN

**JOIN OUR
SOCIALS TO
KEEP UP WITH
UPDATES**

**1 CLUB
2 VENUES** **MODDERFONTEIN**
WEEKLY SCHEDULE

TUESDAY

Weekly time trial

Flamingo Shopping Centre - 17:15

Meet in the adjacent parking area for registration & briefing.
Run starts at 17:30



THURSDAY

Hill/Speed sessions

Bossa Modderfontein parking - 17:15

Meet in the parking area for registration & briefing.
Run starts at 17:30



SATURDAY

Weekend long run

Modderfontein and surrounds - 06:30

Routes, venues & distances shared on WhatsApp group the Friday before.
Meet at 06:15 for registration & briefing.
Run starts at 06:30



STRAVA ROUTES:

TAP TO OPEN

4KM

5KM

8KM



TAP TO OPEN

**JOIN OUR
SOCIALS TO
KEEP UP WITH
UPDATES**

Thank you to our sponsors!



THIRSTI



Get your Membership for 2026!

It's that time again, Green Team — let's gear up for another epic year of running, racing and representing our amazing club with pride!



NEW

Family Discount:

Sign up two or more members from the same household and get **10% off** your total fees!

2026 Membership Fees:		Benefits
Full Membership:	R600	✓ ASA License – your official license to race throughout 2026. ✓ Discounted entry to all club events ✓ Gazebo access at selected races ✓ Coach led Hills / Speed Training on Thursdays ✓ Group Training runs on Saturdays ✓ Incredible club support and team spirit – you'll never run alone in green!
Nedbank Employee Membership:	R550	
Juniors (Under 20 yrs):	R350	
Seniors (Over 60 yrs):	R350	
Social Members:	R365	
		✓ Same as above except no ASA License! <i>Please note that you will need to purchase a temporary license at each race and may not run in Nedbank kit</i>

SIGN UP

How to Renew or Join:

1. Download and complete the [ASA 2026 Licence Form](#)
2. Make payment according to your membership category
3. Email your completed form and proof of payment (use your name as the reference) to: info@nedbankrunningclubcg.co.za

Click here for the
2026 Race Calendar



Hip-hip hooray for our Randburg Harriers gazebo volunteers:



Cheslin & Japhta!

Upcoming Gazebos at races

August, Sunday 9th

- Old Eds Road Race - 5km | 10km | 21.1km

August, Sunday 23rd

- Wanderers Road Race - 5km | 10km | 21.1km

Please click here if you are keen to host a Gazebo

Like
& follow



<https://www.facebook.com/Nedbank-Running-Club-Central-Gauteng-Johannesburg-and-Soweto-150279161653752>



<https://www.instagram.com/nedbankrunningcg/>

Please click here
if you are keen
to assist with
time-keeping

MNHW Donations

Reminder: Support MNHW at Time Trials

Please remember to donate towards the incredible Modderfontein Neighbourhood Watch (MNHW) representatives who keep us safe at our weekly Time Trial events.

How to donate:

- Cash: Look out for the MNHW donation box at Time Trials.
- Card: Tap & go with the YOCO machine available at every TT.
- EFT: Transfer into the club account using 'MNHW' as your reference.



Every contribution—big or small—helps us give back to the team that looks after us week after week. Let's show our appreciation and keep their good work going!

Thank You!

Captain's Report

Beginners' Running: Fact vs Fiction Mythbusters - Couch Society Edition!



With July wrapping up, winter is officially in its home stretch. The early morning chill in Jo'burg is still real, but August is right around the corner — and with it comes our final preparation month before we officially launch our Couch Society (Couch to 10km) programme!

Mark your calendars: the Couch Society programme runs from September through the 8th of November, taking you step-by-step from base fitness to crossing that 10km finish line before summer hits full stride.

Whether you've been building your base with our winter walks or thinking about dusting off your running shoes for the first time in months, it's easy for 'running noise'—all the outdated advice, myths, and unwritten rules we hear on the road or online—to start creeping in.

Before we kick off in September, let's clear the air. Separating running fact from fiction isn't just trivia; it's about getting you to that start line healthy, confident, and clear-headed.

Here are five big running myths we need to bust before August ends:

Myth 1: 'Running is the best way to lose weight'

- **The Fiction:** If you run enough kilometres, the weight just melts off.
- **The Fact:** Running burns energy, but it also spikes your appetite. If you hit the road without managing nutrition and recovery, your body naturally demands those calories back (and usually more). Running alone, without basic strength work, can also lead to muscle loss, which actually slows down your metabolism over time.
- **The Couch Society Reality:** Joining our Couch Society in September isn't about chasing a number on the scale—it's about building long-term fitness. Better yet, the programme will teach you exactly how to fuel your runs properly, showing you what to eat before and after workouts so you stay energized, recover quickly, and build lean strength without burning out.

Myth 2: 'Sweating more means you're burning more fat and calories.'

- **The Fiction:** Layering up in heavy tracksuits on a cold morning to sweat heavily means you're melting fat faster.
- **The Fact:** Sweating is purely your body's cooling system (thermoregulation), not an indicator of fat loss. Any rapid weight drop after a heavy, sweaty run is just water weight that you'll replace as soon as you rehydrate. Burning fat comes from sustaining effort over time, not raising your body temperature to excess.

- **The Couch Society Reality:** Dress comfortably for the Jo'burg winter mornings—dress for how you'll feel 10 minutes into the run, not the first 30 seconds. To take the guesswork out of wardrobe choices, the Couch Society will teach you all the running gear do's and don'ts, from fabrics that prevent chafing, to dressing right for any weather.



Myth 3: 'Running ruins your knees.'

- **The Fiction:** Road running guarantees joint destruction and long-term injury.
- **The Fact:** Research consistently shows that recreational runners actually have lower rates of knee osteoarthritis compared to non-runners. Cartilage is living tissue—it adapts and strengthens under controlled, progressive load. What actually causes joint issues isn't running itself; it's increasing distance or intensity too quickly, without giving your body time to adapt.
- **The Couch Society Reality:** That's precisely why our Couch Society schedule is structured from September to November with gradual, progressive steps. If you follow the schedule rather than rushing your distance, your joints will adapt and get stronger, not weaker.

Myth 4: 'You need to do static stretching before every run.'

- **The Fiction:** Holding long calf and hamstring stretches on cold muscles before heading out prevents injury.
- **The Fact:** Holding static stretches before a run can actually temporarily reduce muscle power without lowering your injury risk. What your body needs before stepping into cold air is dynamic movement—waking up your nervous system and getting blood flowing.
- **The Couch Society Reality:** Save the deep static stretches for after your run! To make sure you're doing it right, every Couch Society member will get access to a practical video guide, showing you exactly how to warm up dynamically before a run and stretch properly afterward.

Myth 5: 'You have to change how your foot strikes the ground.'

- **The Fiction:** Heel striking is inherently bad, and everyone must force themselves onto their forefeet.
- **The Fact:** Most runners naturally land on their heels. Forcing an unnatural forefoot landing often leads to Achilles strain and calf overload. What matters far more than which part of your foot touches first is where it lands relative to your body—landing light and directly under your hips (a comfortable cadence) beats over-analysing foot angles every time.



- **The Couch Society Reality:** Don't let your stride be your main focus right now. That said, as part of the Couch Society, you'll have dedicated coach and mentors by your side. If your stride is genuinely causing discomfort or inefficiency, our team will be there to help guide and adjust it safely.

This is just the tip of the iceberg!

The science and training tips above are just a tiny preview of what's in store. The Couch Society isn't just a running schedule—it's a complete roadmap where you'll learn about pacing, recovery, injury prevention, race-day prep, and how to enjoy every kilometre on the road.

August is our runway to get mentally and physically primed. Whether you've been walking through winter or taking a break on the couch, this programme is designed to guide you safely, step by step, all the way to the 8th of November.

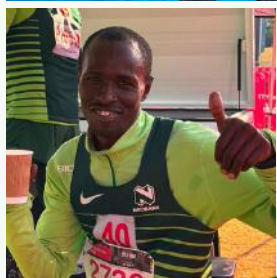
Spread the Word

Do you have a friend, partner, work colleague, or family member who has been saying, "I want to start running"? **Tell them about the Couch Society!** This is the ultimate, supportive environment for beginners or anyone looking to restart their fitness journey.

Stay tuned to our club chat, newsletters, and announcements at events over the coming weeks for details on how to register and secure a spot for September.



See you on the road – stay safe. tackle your dynamic warm-up. and let's get ready to launch together!



Seen in Green

