

Banana Facts – the average banana has approximately 105 calories

YOUR FITNESS
IS 100% MENTAL
YOUR BODY
WON'T
GO
WHERE
YOUR MIND
DOESN'T
PUSH IT

Bananas are one of the most nutritional and healing fruits readily available today. They are 76% water and are packed with vitamins such as vitamins C and B6 and minerals such as potassium, copper, and manganese. This high water/nutrient ratio makes them a great electrolyte food perfect for busy moms, workout enthusiasts, and people on the go.

Bananas are also an excellent “brain food” great for heavy thinkers and are known to help build strong muscles as well as strengthen the nervous system. Bananas contain powerful anti-fungal and antibiotic compounds as well as protease inhibitors which can help stop viruses in their tracts. This makes them highly beneficial for chronic illnesses such as shingles, Epstein Barr, Parkinson’s disease, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, chronic fatigue syndrome, and lupus. Bananas are also particularly good for lowering blood pressure, irritable bowel syndrome, neurological disorders, diarrhea, atherosclerosis, osteoporosis, coronary artery disease, crohn’s disease, stroke, and

kidney, colon, and lung cancers.

Bananas contain high levels of fructooligosaccharides (FOS) which along with insulin helps to promote nutrient absorption and assimilation. Bananas support the natural acidophilus bacteria in the bowel which helps promote a healthy and functional digestive tract as well as keep the immune system healthy and strong. Bananas can prevent ulcers by strengthening the surface cells of the stomach lining which helps to create a thicker barrier against digestive acid and pepsin-the two main causes of ulcers.

Bananas are also an excellent food for athletes as they can help replenish energy and revitalize the body instantly. Bananas are rich in the amino acid tryptophan which can help to promote sleep and regulate the sleep-wake cycle. Bananas can be blended with a little water to make a sweet and creamy “milk” that is both dairy-free and hypo-allergenic. Banana “milk” is a great alternative for children and infants who are allergic to dairy and soy proteins. Bananas can also be cut into pieces, frozen and placed into a blender or food processor for amazing dairy-free and fat-free ice creams and “milk”shakes.

Bananas should be ripe when eaten which means the peel should be lightly speckled and the fruit has a sweet, creamy taste. Unripe bananas can cause constipation and other adverse reactions. Bananas are a fantastic healing and nourishing food that is a great addition to a healthy diet. They can be readily found at your local grocery and health food stores.*

*No idea if this is all true, other than calorie count & where to buy them. But I like bananas. Solo, in cereal, sautéed with egg beaters... I’m a fan... and holding out hope! “fructooligosaccharides?” Definitely made up!

Why Meditating and Running Aren't As Different As You Think

Molly Haight

Meditating and distance running have become the glue that holds me together. On the surface, the two may seem very different, but once you begin to explore the challenges behind them, you realize how similar they can be.

Meditating and running start the same way First, there is the resistance. It starts with knowing you should run or sit. I have that itch for solitude, for tuning in and checking in, or for that burst of energy. But each time I set out to run or meditate, I'm met with some kind of resistance: a resistance to put on my shoes or sit down on my cushion. There are emails to answer, dishes to wash, social media feeds to check. If I run farther or sit longer tomorrow, does skipping today make it okay? We all know what this type of resistance feels like because we encounter it in nearly anything we're committed to.

Pushing past the resistance to begin is often the hardest but the most important part. Once you push past the resistance of starting, there's another type of resistance you collide with.

Whether it's the first five miles or the first five minutes, there's always a period of time when the muscles aren't warm and when your mind is still racing—going through your days and weeks, barely even noticing what's going on around you, counting down the minutes until it's over. It takes time and work, but then, it happens—you find clear, steady focus. Some days it happens more quickly than others, some days it doesn't happen at all—like no matter how long you run or how long you sit, that thing that's been nagging at you just won't go away.

Resistance is often the hardest part of the practice. It demands that you make the decision to quit or to commit. Committing to keep going, to keep putting one foot in front of the other or to stay still even though your nose has never itched more—this commitment is all mind over matter. You push through pain and discomfort and self-doubt, accepting that it will all be there until the end, or until you decide to no longer accept the pain and doubt as truths, or as the sum of who you are.

Then, there are the side effects of moving and breathing, or of sitting with your eyes closed and being still. You start to wake up to what's really going on. Running pushes you to your physical limits, beyond what you thought was possible, and beyond expectation. Sometimes you let yourself down, and sometimes you push yourself harder than you knew was possible. You wake up to how you engage with challenge and how you process pain. My favorite part of trail running is the period of time right after resistance. You've already got your shoes on. You've pushed passed the aches and grumbles of the first few miles and you've found a steady cadence. Your breath starts to slow down, your stride gets a little smoother, and all around you nature seems to be moving with you. You fall into a rhythm where each foot falls perfectly around each rock and root, and everything around you gets quiet.

This is the moment I crave: the moment when everything is quiet, when nature and "you" don't seem so separate but part of one great scheme, when pain is not an object, when there is only body and breath moving swiftly through time and space.

Meditating can be so much harder than running. There's always a distraction with running: something to see, a time to beat, and muscles singing to you giving you no choice but to remember that you are alive. ***Meditating is different.*** Eyes closed, it's just you and your own nagging thoughts. You can choose to become completely distracted and absorbed in your thoughts, or you can choose to commit. You can choose to take on the challenge of constantly being with your thoughts no matter what comes up, no matter how bored you get with yourself or no matter how hard it may get. You continue to sit and the only thing that has to work is your mind.

Meditating is a unique and challenging battle but the results are transformational.

Just like running, you reach a moment, maybe just a brief moment, when everything is okay, when it's just you in the moment, lines blurring between self and not self, real and unreal. In the end, it doesn't matter what you choose to challenge yourself with. Whether you meditate, practice Bikram yoga, ride a bike, run on a treadmill, or climb rocks, what matters is that you constantly put your face right up against resistance and challenge, and push right past them. ***What matters is finding something that wakes you up and reminds you that you are alive, that you are more than your pain and your self-doubt, and that you are whole and not so separate from everything existing around you.***

