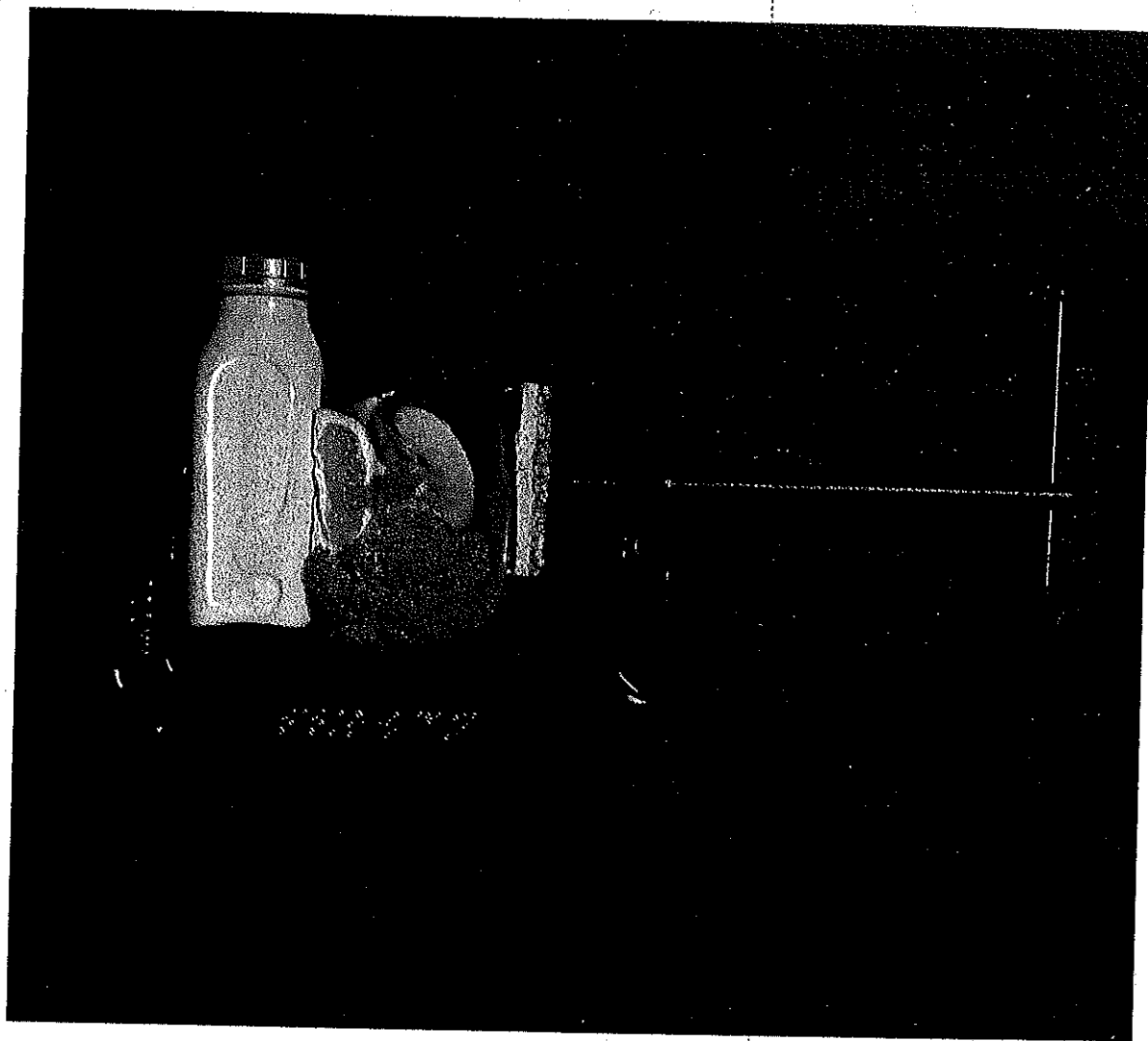


FUEL



ELIMINATE STOMACH TROUBLE WITH OUR SHORT LIST OF FOODS TO EAT—AND AVOID. BY KRISTIN BJORNSEN

Runner's Digest

HALFWAY THROUGH the 2003 Los Angeles Marathon, Emma Diego was on pace to clock a 3:40—her Boston qualifying time—when painful stomach cramps forced her to make three detours into Porta Potties. She finished in 3:48. The total length of her lavatory layovers? Eight minutes.

Diego's experience is, unfortunately, not uncommon. Studies suggest that as many as 60 percent of runners experience varying degrees of nausea and unpleasant stomach issues during or following a run. Gastrointestinal (GI) issues can make finishing a workout painful, or worse, they can impair performance. The problems are said to be caused, in part, because blood is diverted from

the GI tract to the muscles during exercise. The diversion of blood can cause cramping and limits the body's ability to absorb fluids, potentially leading to dehydration. "Stops at the Port-a-John can also accelerate dehydration, which can end a race," says Bobby McGee, a distance-running coach in Colorado and running expert for USA Triathlon.

The main culprit of stomach distress, however, is running itself. When you ride a bike, blood is also diverted from the gut, but cyclists report half the number of GI problems as runners. That's because running has twice the force of impact. "All the pounding jost-