



Hydration for Sports

Why Are Fluids So Important During Sport Activity?

The body relies on water or other fluids to cool itself during physical activity. It does this primarily as a means for you to sweat. As the sweat on your skin evaporates, your body cools. When you don't drink enough fluids before and during activity, you can become dehydrated and your athletic performance can be impaired. Effects of dehydration include nausea, dizziness, and fatigue. Did you know that one of the main causes of upset stomach in distance runners is lack of fluids? More serious cases of dehydration can lead to heatstroke.

How do I prevent dehydration during training or a competition?

The first rule of thumb is: When you are thirsty, drink. When you feel you have quenched your thirst, drink some more!

Refer to the following chart to find out when and how much you should be drinking.

Timing	Approximate Amount of Fluids You Should Drink
2 hours before activity	2 cups (16 ounces) (equivalent to a small bottle of water that you can buy in the store)
10 to 15 minutes before activity	2½ cups (20 ounces)
Every 15 minutes during activity	½ to ¾ cup (4 to 6 ounces) (the amount in a juice glass)
After activity	2 cups (16 ounces) for every pound lost during activity (Weigh yourself before and after activity. You likely will have lost water weight through sweat during exercise.)

What should I drink?

- Drink water before any activity.
- Drink water during an activity that lasts less than 1 hour.
- Drink diluted fruit juices, Gatorade, or other low-concentrate sports drinks during an activity that lasts more than 60 minutes. These fluids contain small amounts of carbohydrates to maintain energy and electrolytes to replenish what is lost when you sweat.
- Drink water and/or fruit juices or sports recovery drinks after an activity. Fruit juices and specially formulated recovery drinks refuel your muscles after exercise.