

Hydration Needs for Exercise

A key to successful workouts is keeping well hydrated before, during and after your exercise. The length of your workouts, heat, humidity and the amount you sweat are all major factors to consider when trying to keep your body in proper fluid balance.

HYDRATION TIPS

- Start hydrating early. Drink 1-2 cups of water when you first get up in the morning
- Keep a water bottle with you all day long.
- Drink before you get thirsty (thirst is a sign that your body is already dehydrated).
- Drink 1-2 cups of fluid 30 minutes before exercise.
- Drink ½-1 cup of fluid every 15 minutes of exercise.
- Replenish lost fluids (2½ cups of fluid for every pound lost during exercise).
- Keep drinking even after your thirst is quenched.

WATER vs. SPORTS DRINKS

For exercise lasting under 45 minutes, water is your best choice. For the recreational athlete who may exercise for 30-40 minutes per session, water is sufficient for hydration.

- Water is easily absorbed.
- Water is the best choice to drink before moderate-length exercise.
- Water is readily available and less expensive than sports drinks.

Research suggests that for workouts consisting of at least 45 minutes of continuous exercise or high intensity workouts of any duration like running, aerobics, biking and intense weight training, a sports drink may be beneficial in delaying muscle fatigue by providing your body with additional energy.

- Sports drinks contain water, carbohydrates and electrolytes (generally sodium and potassium). You can make your own by mixing one cup water, one cup orange juice and a pinch of salt.
- Sports drinks will replenish fluids while containing a small amount of carbohydrate and electrolytes.
- A steady source of carbohydrates during exercise fights off fatigue and enhances performance by fueling the muscles during exercise.
- Studies show that a solution containing electrolytes and carbohydrates may be absorbed more quickly and helps to retain fluids consumed after prolonged intense exercise.
- A good-tasting sports drink may encourage you to consume more fluid.

Water

- Drink anytime
- Quickly absorbed
- Recommended for short bursts of activity
- Costs only cents

Fluid Replacement

- Drink during exercise
- 4-8% carbohydrate
- Replaces lost fluids and electrolytes
- Costs a few dollars

If you have questions or concerns, or need to make an appointment,
please call: **Dial-A-Nurse at 333-2700.**

If you are concerned about any difference in your treatment plan and the information
in this handout, you are advised to contact your health care provider.

Visit the McKinley Health Center Web Site at: <http://www.mckinley.uiuc.edu>