

# Hydration Guidelines for Athletes

Why is drinking adequate fluids important?

- Your body does not have a water reservoir for storage, therefore it is important to replace fluids every day.
- Maintains body temperature. Helps prevent you from overheating.
- Essential for digestion, absorption and removal of waste products.
- Helps transport nutrients and other body substances.
- Prevents dehydration

What can happen if I don't drink enough water?

- Your strength and endurance will decrease.
- Heat exhaustion, heat stroke and even death.
- Cramping

Do NOT rely on your thirst mechanism to tell you to drink. If you feel thirsty, it is too late. Your body has begun to feel the effects from dehydration and your performance will suffer along with your body. Do NOT wait that long.

Tweak these guidelines to meet your needs:

Timing	Recommendations
Everyday	Drink adequate fluids. Roughly 1 ml for every calorie consumed. For example, if you eat 4000 calories, drink 4000 ml of fluids (4 L).
2 – 3 hours before training / competition	17 oz of fluid
Immediately prior to training / competition	6 – 12 oz of fluid
Every 15 – 20 minutes during training / competition	6 – 12 oz of fluid
Exercise longer than one hour	Be sure to include a carbohydrate source in the form of solid, gel or sports drinks. Consume roughly 30 – 60 grams of carbohydrate per hour. 600 – 1200 ml of a sports drink will fulfill this need.
After exercise	24 oz for every pound lost from the training session or competition.

### Quick Conversion

1000 ml = 1 liter  
 240 ml = 8 oz  
 1 liter ~ 32 oz  
 8 oz = 1 cup

Drink fluids early and often to replace water lost through sweating. Drink fluids even if you train in a cold environment. Dehydration and decreased performance can still occur. Your needs may increase on hot and humid days.

Sports drinks: Are they necessary?

- More appropriate for sessions or events lasting more than one hour but can be used for shorter sessions.
- Should contain 4 – 8% carbohydrate. Too much = cramping
- Carbohydrate should yield glucose or combination containing glucose.
- Appropriate after an overnight fast or inadequate pre-exercise.

### Over hydration

Too much water can be bad because it can lead to low sodium levels (hyponatremia)

How to avoid over hydration:

- Don't drink more than you sweat.
- Drink sports drinks because they contain some sodium and decrease the likelihood of hyponatremia.