



# Fluids, Dehydration & Thirst Quenchers

Drinking enough fluids to replace sweat loss is essential for top athletic performance. For most exercisers, water satisfies the body's needs. For very sweaty athletes, consuming sports drinks during exercise helps delay dehydration and boost energy.

## Daily fluids

- On a daily basis, make sure you drink enough fluids. Morning urine should not be dark and smelly!
- You should have to pee every two to four hours throughout the day. The urine should be light yellow.
- To learn how much fluid to drink during exercise, weigh yourself naked before and after a hard workout. One pound (16 ounces) lost represents one pound of sweat to replace.
- Lose no more than 2% of your body weight (3 pounds for a 150-pound athlete).

## Fluids before hard exercise

- The day before, drink extra water, juice, or other fluids.
- The morning of the event, drink about 16 gulps of fluids up to two hours pre-event. This allows time pre-exercise to pee out the excess.
- Five or ten minutes before start-time, “tank up” on another 8 to 16 gulps of water or sports drink, as tolerated.

## Fluids during hard exercise

- Prevent dehydration early in the event by drinking adequate fluids before you get thirsty!
- By knowing your sweat rate, you can drink to match your sweat loss.
- Experiment during training to figure out which flavors of sport drinks settle best in your stomach.

## Recovery fluids

- Drink to quench your thirst, and then drink a little more.
- If several hours pass without a need to urinate, you are dehydrated. Keep drinking!
- Drinking 12 to 20 ounces of chocolate milk within the hour after exercise enhances recovery.

## Sodium replacement

- If exercising for more than 3 hours in the heat, consume salty foods or fluids before, during, and after exercise.
- To replace sodium, add salt to your food, eat pretzels, soup, cheese, and other salty foods both before and after exercise.

