

Hydration

Avoid heat stress and poor performance by adequate fluid replacement during your sport or activity.

- Dehydration contributes to fatigue and may make you more susceptible to cramps, heat stress and heat stroke.
- Even small degrees of dehydration can cause a decrease in exercise performance
 - o Physical and mental performance deteriorates at even 2% of body weight loss (e.g. 1.5 kg for a 75 kg person)
 - o If you lose 5% of your body weight (e.g. 3.5kg for a 70kg person) then serious heat injury can occur.
- Exercise in hot or humid weather will result in additional fluid loss and increase the risk of dehydration.

HOW MUCH FLUID DO I NEED?

- You can assess your fluid requirements by weighing yourself before and after exercise or sport
 - o 1kg lost = 1 litre of fluid deficit
 - o 2kg lost = 2 litres of fluid deficit etc.
- Aim to keep these fluid losses to a minimum by drinking before, regularly during and then after exercise.
- Sweating and fluid losses continue after exercise. After exercise aim to replace at least 1.5 times the amount of fluid deficit, measured at the end of exercise.

“DRINK UP” USING THE FOLLOWING MEASURES

- Drink plenty of fluids! Sip proactively across the day rather than gulping large volumes infrequently
- Do not wait until you feel thirsty before you drink! Thirst is a poor indicator of fluid needs
- Although water replaces fluids, sports drinks (containing 4-8% carbohydrate and small amounts of electrolytes) provide:
 - o additional energy from carbohydrate which can delay fatigue and enhance performance, especially during prolonged events
 - o salts (electrolytes) which aid the rehydration process
- Even if you do not need the extra fuel, flavoured drinks such as sports drinks encourage fluid consumption more than plain water, and therefore lead to improved fluid balance
- Sweat is mainly water and very little salt. Some people, however, may require additional electrolytes in their fluids to improve hydration, but should only do so under medical supervision.

DRINK UP ROUTINE

- Avoid starting exercise dehydrated. Drink plenty of fluids for several hours prior to exercise.
- If you are well hydrated you should be able to pass a good volume of clear urine in the hour before exercise
- **Drink at least 500ml (2-3 glasses) 1/2 to 1 hour prior to exercise**
- **Drink at least 200ml (1 glass) every 10-15 minutes during exercise**
- **During exercise take advantage of all breaks in play to drink up**
- **After exercise drink 1 ½ times your fluid deficit to ensure you are fully rehydrated.**

