

Hydrating for Sports Performance



NORTHSIDE HOSPITAL
ORTHOPEDIC INSTITUTE

SPORTS MEDICINE

Your Source of Strength

For help with an individualized nutrition plan, contact the Sports Dietitian with Northside Hospital Sports Medicine at **404-327-1626**.

■ ■ What is hydration?

Your body is about 60% water! Since water makes up such a big part of your body, it is crucial that you drink enough fluids to maintain good hydration. Dehydration occurs when you don't drink enough water and other fluids to replace what is lost in urine, sweat and breathing. If you are dehydrated, you will not perform at your best. Electrolytes (including sodium, chloride, potassium, magnesium and calcium) are lost in sweat, and help balance your body fluids and keep your muscles working properly.

■ ■ Why is hydration important?

Hydration allows you to perform your best, both in your sport and in the classroom. Maintaining hydration can help with:

- Reaction time
- Focus
- Energy level
- Body temperature

■ ■ Water or Sports Drink?

Choose water most of the time to maintain hydration. Sports drinks (ex: Gatorade or Powerade) replace fluids and electrolytes that are lost in sweat during longer activity but are not always needed.

- For exercise that lasts an hour or less, choose water to replace water lost in sweat
- For exercise that lasts more than an hour, choose a sports drink to replace water and electrolytes lost in sweat

■ ■ Action Plan

Before practice or games

- Drink water and other fluids throughout the day
- Drink 16-20 ounces of water 2-3 hours before exercise
- Drink 8-10 ounces of water about 10 minutes before exercise

Prevent excess dehydration (more than 2% of your body weight from water loss)

- Drink 6-8 ounces (several sips) of water or sports drink every 15 minutes during exercise
- Drink about 24-32 ounces of water or sports drink every hour

Replace what you lost during activity

- Drink 20-24 ounces of water or other fluids for every pound of sweat lost

Check your urine color

- Light yellow: well hydrated; good to go
- Dark yellow: mild dehydration; drink 16-20 ounces of fluid
- Amber: severe dehydration; drink 20-32 ounces of fluid and contact the Sports Dietitian to develop a hydration plan