



Hydration Needs for Exercise

Maintaining proper hydration is the key to having successful workouts. Things such as heat, humidity and the amount you sweat will all affect your hydration level.

The most obvious sign of dehydration is thirst, but other signs include: fatigue, muscle cramps, headaches, dizziness, nausea, and difficulty paying attention. The only way for the body to avoid and recover from dehydration is through fluid intake.

To avoid becoming dehydrated, you should continually think about your fluid intake throughout the day, not just during exercise.

Hydration tips

- Drink at least 8 oz. of fluid first thing in the morning
- Sip fluids throughout the day. Carrying a water bottle is a good way to remind you to drink more.
- Sip cool beverages, they are more easily absorbed than warm ones.
- Drinking low calorie, low sugar beverages such as flavored waters may help you drink more, but try to minimize the amount of soda, alcohol and coffee. They will only dehydrate you.

Hydration for exercise

- Drink one to two cups of fluid two hours before exercise.
- Drink ½ to 1 cup of fluid every 15 minutes during exercise.
- Following exercise, drink 2½ cups of fluid for each pound lost during exercise.
- Continue drinking even when you don't feel thirsty.

What to drink?

Water is optimal fluid for maintaining hydration. It is easily absorbed, and easily accessible! It is adequate for exercise sessions lasting up to 45 minutes.

Sports drinks are only more beneficial than water when you exercise for more than one hour. If you are exercising longer than one hour, drinking a beverage with carbohydrates and electrolytes is recommended. Try to consume 30 to 60 grams of carbohydrates for each hour of exercise.

Example: If your beverage has 15 grams of carbohydrates in an eight ounce serving, then you will need to drink between 16 and 32 ounces for each hour of exercise you complete.

If you are a registered University of Illinois student and 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>