

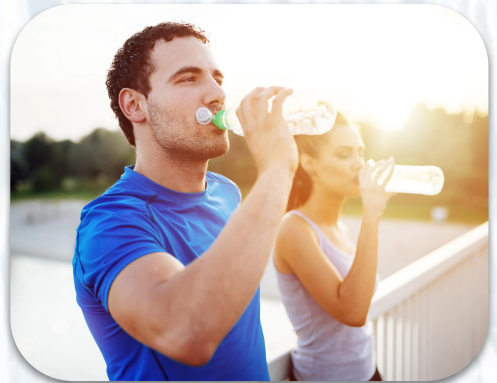


HYDRATION GUIDE

Proper hydration is the cornerstone of optimal performance and overall well-being for athletes and active adults alike.

Whether you're a dedicated athlete looking to enhance your endurance and recovery, a weekend warrior aiming to improve your athletic performance, or simply someone who values staying active, or is trying to be more active, hydration is essential not only for your success on the field, court or in the office, but your everyday well-being.

As a registered dietitian, I'm excited to share this hydration guide with you, providing science-backed insights, practical tips, and strategies to help you be *Ready 2 Perform* Now, and for Life!



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The Impact

Staying properly hydrated offers an abundance of benefits for overall health and well-being each and everyday, including:

Optimal Physical Performance: Adequate hydration is essential for peak physical performance. When you're well-hydrated, your muscles and joints function more efficiently, improving your strength, endurance, and coordination.

Temperature Regulation: Hydration helps regulate your body temperature, preventing overheating during exercise or exposure to hot weather. It enables you to sweat and dissipate heat effectively, reducing the risk of heat-related illnesses.

Cognitive Function: Dehydration can impair cognitive function, leading to decreased focus, alertness, and memory. Staying hydrated helps maintain mental clarity and concentration.

Digestive Health: Ample hydration aids in the digestion and absorption of nutrients. It can prevent issues like constipation and promote a healthy digestive system.

Joint and Muscle Health: Proper hydration lubricates joints and reduces the risk of muscle cramps and injuries. It also supports the transport of nutrients to muscle cells for repair and growth.

The Impact (cont.)

Skin Health: Hydration helps maintain skin elasticity and a healthy complexion. Dehydration can lead to dry, flaky skin and an increased risk of skin issues.

Detoxification: Hydration supports the body's natural detoxification processes, helping to eliminate waste products and toxins through urine. This is crucial for overall health and reducing the risk of kidney stones and urinary tract infections.

Mood and Energy Levels: Dehydration can lead to feelings of fatigue and irritability. Proper hydration helps maintain energy levels and a positive mood throughout the day.

Weight Management: Drinking water before meals can help reduce appetite and calorie intake, supporting weight management and promoting a healthy diet.

Heart Health: Staying hydrated is associated with a reduced risk of heart diseases. It helps maintain adequate blood volume, reducing the workload on the heart and blood vessels.

The Basics - Water

Water is one of the most essential components of our body and our health and being under hydrated can have a massive impact on sports performance and focus throughout the day.

Drinking sufficient water on a daily basis is important since we do not store significant amounts of water in our bodies. We need to consume adequate amounts of water to hydrate every cell and allow our bodies to make gastric juices, blood, urine and sweat which are critical to whole body health and athletic performance and recovery.



Daily Hydration

Every human is different so we need to ensure we are hydrating based on our daily needs and athletic pursuits.

Did you know that a 2% drop in the body's water supply can cause signs of dehydration?

Symptoms like brain fog, difficulty focusing and fatigue are all signs that many struggle with daily. It is estimated that under hydration is the root cause of mild day time fatigue in many Americans.

There are a lot of calculations to determine your water needs but a good estimate is:

- 64-70 ounces of water per day for women
- 70-90 ounces of water per day for men
- Adolescents should be targeting roughly 64 ounces of water per day as a baseline



Hydration for Sport

Prior to Training

Aim to consume 16-24 ounces of water roughly 2 hours before training as well as ensuring proper hydration throughout the day for afternoon and evening practices. Remember hydration is a daily effort. If you are thirsty you are already under hydrated.

During Training

Aim to sip roughly 6-12 ounces of water every 20 minutes of training, especially in hot/ humid or cold and dry climates. Using electrolytes added to your water intra-workout can also help replace the electrolytes lost in sweat. See below for more information on electrolytes.

Post Training

Athletes should weigh themselves before and after training and a good target is to replace every 1lb of weight lost with 16-24 ounces of water within the first 2 hours of training, but definitely within six hours after training. If no weight is lost during exercise then just sip fluids and ensure you hit the minimum water intake needed for daily hydration.



Water Plus...

Electrolytes

Electrolytes, including sodium, potassium, chloride and magnesium, are minerals found throughout our body and have many roles in sports performance including muscle contractions and fluid balance within our cells. Water does not contain electrolytes, so not replacing electrolytes, especially sodium, during intense exercise can lead to muscle cramps, and reductions in mental acuity and sports performance.

Using electrolyte replacements can enhance hydration and should be used in athletes exercising/ training for longer than two hours or who have a high sweat loss.

Carbohydrates

Carbohydrate ingestion can help improve athletic performance when training lasts longer than 60-90 minutes. Look for sports drinks with <8% carbohydrate concentration, since higher carbohydrate percentages can actually delay fluid absorption. Beverages that contain >8% carbohydrate concentration include fruit juice, honey, soda and carbohydrate gels.



Caution With...

Caffeine

Caffeine is a natural stimulant found in coffee, tea and cocoa and can enhance mood, focus and sports performance. However one should be cautious when using caffeine since excessive intake can lead to increased heart rate, insomnia and blood pressure.

Active adults and youth should avoid energy drinks and soda. Higher quality sources of caffeine for adults include green or black tea, coffee and espresso. I recommend limiting caffeine to 100-200mg per day and to stop caffeine consumption at noon. Again please ensure that you assess your individual tolerance for caffeine and also take into consideration your cardiovascular health.

Alcohol

Alcohol is a diuretic and will absolutely cause dehydration. Alcohol will cause a reduction in the amount of vasopressin (an antidiuretic hormone) your body makes which will reduce the amount of fluids your body can retain.

The best amount of alcohol is none and obviously alcohol is not recommended for youth or anyone that takes certain medications and has specific health risks. If you choose to drink, ensure you are drinking water, specifically water with electrolytes, while you drink since that will help with reducing the risk of dehydration. I highly recommend avoiding the combination of alcohol and caffeine.

One final note, alcohol is never recommended around physical activity or training since it will delay recovery and prevent muscle growth and repair.

Drink It Up...

Staying hydrated is a fundamental aspect of maintaining good health and optimal functioning of the body, benefiting physical performance, mental acuity, and overall well-being. It is a simple yet essential practice that should not be overlooked in our daily lives.

Remember every athlete and individual is different and may require specific instructions.

Consult with your physician, registered dietitian or athletic trainer before making any large adjustments to your hydration and supplementation routine.

Please feel free to share this Guide with friends or family, your team or program, business or organization.



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