

Why Should Athletes Hydrate?

- Hydration is one of the easiest parts of your training routines and also one of the most important
- Athletes are more likely to become dehydrated because exercise accelerates water loss through increased sweating and breathing rate
- If you are not properly hydrated, **performance suffers**, because dehydration can result in:
 - limited functioning of muscles and heart because you are unable to regulate your body temperature
 - impaired mental clarity
 - limited ability to recover from exercise/training

When should an athlete hydrate?

- Don't use thirst as the indication of when you should drink. Being thirsty means you're already dehydrated! If you're serious about performance, *hydration should be scheduled just like nutrition, workouts and practice drills.*

Before an event:

- Drink 500-600ml (around 2 cups) of water 2 hrs before exercise
- Drink a small amount (¼ to 1/3 cup or a few sips) of water 10-20 min before the event-but don't over hydrate which may cause bloating or cramping during your event

During the event

- Remember thirst is not your indicator!
- Drink small amounts of water or sports drink at regular breaks during the event, ideally matching fluid intake with losses from sweat, breathing and urination (you can test this by weighing yourself before and after the event)
- Drink more in hot weather
- Though ice water may seem the most refreshing, opt for *room temperature*. (ice water sits in your stomach, sloshing around until your body has a chance to warm it)

After the event

- Despite your best efforts, you'll finish the event in fluid deficit, so even if you don't feel thirsty, drink some water so as not to curb recovery
- Consider a sports drink to replace electrolytes in addition to water loss

Sport drinks VS Energy Drinks VS Water

- Water always a good bet
- Consider sports drink (Gatorade, Powerade etc.) on workout days where you have multiple activities or if your event requires sustained, intense activity for over an hour.
- Sports drinks are designed to quickly build and maintain hydration levels before an event and aiding recovery/replenishment after an event. Sports drinks should only be used on event days as the extra sugars are unnecessary during rest
- "Energy" drinks are not recommended especially for young athletes as the high caffeine content, improper electrolyte balance and carbonation are more likely to impair performance than improve it.