

# Hydration Guidelines for the Soccer Athlete

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## What is DEHYDRATION:

- Athletes whose sweat loss exceeds fluid intake become dehydrated during activity
- Fluid loss of 1-2% of body weight begins to compromise physiological function and negatively influences sports performance.
- Fluid loss of greater than 3% of body weight further disrupts physiological function and increases an athlete's risk of developing an exertional heat illness (ie, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke)

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1) Educate the players how important it is to begin each practice / game with proper hydration levels and how important it is to continue hydrating during and after exercise.
  - a) Body weight changes give the best indication of hydration status.
- 2) Establish a hydration protocol for your team:
  - a) This is as simple as determining the appropriate number of water breaks for the team based on environment (heat/ humidity), intensity of exercise and duration of exercise.
- 3) Athletes should be drinking 500 to 600mL of water or sports drink (with 6% CHO concentration) beginning 2-3 hours before exercise.
- 4) Athletes should then drink 200 to 300mL of water or 6% CHO sports drink 10 to 20 min before exercise.
- 5) Types of drinks / beverages to avoid:
  - a) Fruit juices, CHO gels, sodas, and sports drinks that have greater than 8% are not recommended during exercise as a sole beverage.
  - b) Caffeinated and carbonated beverages should be avoided before, during and after exercise when hydration levels are inadequate.
- 6) Inclusion of sodium chloride in fluid-replacement beverage should be considered under the following conditions:
  - a) Inadequate access to meals or meals not eaten.
  - b) Physical activity exceeding 4 hours in duration.
  - c) During acclimatization to a warmer climate.
- 7) Be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of dehydration.
  - a) Symptoms include:

Thirst	Irritability	Headache	Weakness	Dizziness	General Discomfort
Chills	Vomiting	Nausea	Confusion	Cramping	Profuse or Cessation of Sweating
- 8) A conscious cognizant dehydrated athlete without Gastro-intestinal distress can rehydrate orally aggressively.
- 9) An athlete that has mental compromise from dehydration should be transported to a medical professional immediately. If there is a question, err on the side of caution and activate EMS by dialing 911.

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