



## Staying Hydrated

We all know that drinking fluid throughout the day is recommended, but how much do we need? The old rule of thumb was 8, 8 oz. glasses of water or 64 ounces a day. More recently the guidelines have changed to “drink when thirsty”- due to the thought that that our body will effectively signal us to meet our needs for fluid throughout the day. That being said, try to drink water with the goal of having your urine turn pale yellow to clear by mid-afternoon. This indicates a body that is fully hydrated and ridding itself of waste products.

You ask, “Why is a hydrated body so important?” Well to start off with, the human body is largely made of water – 60-65% water by weight. Fluid is responsible for keeping your body temperature regulated, blood volume correct, helps to lubricate and cushion your joints, organs and tissues, ridding your body of waste products, maintaining blood pressure and so much more! It is hard enough to get through the work day when you are dehydrated (signs include: headaches, tiredness, nausea), but even more difficult to exercise in a dehydrated state. Dehydration causes your blood volume to drop. The more your blood volume decreases, the harder your heart has to work to deliver oxygen to your working muscles. Your muscles need oxygen to perform. To insure your body is functioning at its best follow these simple guidelines:

1. Stay hydrated by drinking throughout the day, keeping urine a light yellow color (light lemonade color, not dark like apple juice).
2. Drink before you run with 14-20 ounces of water or sports drink 1-2 hours before training. Top off your tank with 8 ounces (1 cup) prior to exercise session.
3. Use the restroom just prior to your run to empty bladder.
4. Carry fluid with you. Bring along a bottle and drink 4 ounces every 15 minutes or 20ounces/hour.
5. Drink 16-20 ounces of fluid while you cool down.
6. Water is fine for workouts 60 minutes or less. For longer workouts, shorter workouts in hot/humid conditions, or if you're a heavy sweater, a sports drink such as Nuun or Gatorade is recommended to replace lost electrolytes.
  - a. Sodium maintains fluid balance and fluid retention
  - b. Potassium prevents muscle cramps
  - c. Magnesium relaxes muscles
  - d. Calcium is required for normal muscle functions
7. Weigh yourself before and after your workout. Avoid losing more than 2% body weight during exercise. Each pound lost equals about 16 ounces of fluid.
8. For Each pound lost during exercise sip 16-24 ounces of fluid per pound lost.
9. Be aware of climate changes. If it is hot, there is a change in humidity, or you are at a high altitude, your body will require more fluid than usual.
10. Know the signs of dehydration: Nausea after exercise, dark yellow urine, dry/sticky mouth, and dizziness.
11. If the training session lasts longer than 1 hour and/or is hot and humid consider taking a beverage with sodium or as a supplement to avoid dehydration.
12. If you gain weight during a training session you have become overhydrated (hyponatremia) and need to take in sodium, not more water. Drinking too much water will flush out the needed electrolyte stores in your body and can be very dangerous.

Now that you are fully hydrated, go take on the day... and that great workout!