



## Beat the Texas Heat

The following are tips to help prevent dehydration:

1. Drink adequate fluids on a daily basis. The easiest way to check if you are well hydrated is to monitor the amount and color of your urine. You should urinate frequently throughout the day and the urine should be a clear, lemonade color. Vitamin pills may cause your urine to be dark colored, so it is best to monitor hydration by the quantity of urine. Another way to monitor hydration is to weigh yourself before and after exercise. For each pound that you lose during exercise, you should drink 16 ounces of fluid. It is easy during the summer months to become chronically dehydrated. Chronic fatigue and headaches can be caused by dehydration. Pay attention to how you feel. Remember that caffeine and alcohol can act as a diuretic and increase fluid loss.

2. Hydrate prior to exercise. Drink 16-24 ounces of fluids two hours prior to exercise. This allows the body time to process the liquids so that you will have a chance to eliminate them prior to your workout. Consume another 16 ounces of cold water or sports drink 10 to 15 minutes before exercise to help lower your body temperature and allow your body to be ready to replace sweat losses.

3. Drink during exercise. Thirst is not an adequate guide. It is necessary to drink according to a schedule. It is ideal to drink 5-10 ounces of water, sports drinks or diluted juice every 15-20 minutes.

Mark a sports bottle in 5 or 10 ounce increments to help you keep track. You will be playing catch up because the body can sweat off as much as three times this amount. It is important to take plenty of fluids early to aid in preventing dehydration. By the time you are thirsty, you have lost 1% of your body weight and your performance suffers. Drink before you are thirsty.

4. Quench your thirst and keep drinking. You need to drink 16 ounces for every pound of body weight lost after exercise. Rehydrating within one hour post-exercise will help you to recover quickly. Water is an effective beverage for exercise lasting one hour or less. For athletes who are exercising for 60 to 90 minutes, a sports drink, containing 4-8% carbohydrate, such as Gatorade or

Powerade, can offer an energy advantage. Consuming these carbohydrates during long matches will help maintain a normal blood sugar level and increase your endurance. Drinks that contain > 10% carbohydrate such as fruit juice, soft drinks and concentrated fructose drinks are absorbed slower and may cause gastrointestinal distress. It is best to experiment during training to see what works best for you. Sweat contains water and also small amounts of sodium, potassium and other electrolytes that keep your body in fluid balance. You can easily replace these losses after exercise by consuming a balanced diet. Keep these tips in mind as the Texas heat and humidity arrive because adequate hydration can make the difference between winning and losing.

Reference:Catherine Kruppa, MS, RD, LD