



Sports Shorts

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

Hydration for Kids

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Why is hydration important for sports?

Proper hydration needs to be part of a young athlete's workout plan. The benefits of a proper hydration plan include:

- Keep body cool in hot and humid temperatures and when wearing heavy equipment (hockey, football)
- Prevention of fatigue, lethargy, headaches, muscle cramps, dizziness, and heat illness
- Help digest food
- Optimize muscle recovery and stamina

If your young athlete is overly tired, dizzy, light-headed, or sore this could be due to dehydration.

How do I know if an athlete is well hydrated?

Teach your young athlete to check his or her urine color! The color of urine is the best way to know if an athlete is well-hydrated. The color of urine should be pale yellow (like lemonade). If the color is darker yellow (like apple juice) the athlete should drink in regular intervals to improve hydration status until urine is pale yellow. Observing the color of urine is relevant at any time- before, during or after exercise. See chart.

How much and what type of fluid should a young athlete be consuming before a practice or event?

Helping your young athlete stay hydrated in everyday life is important. Some ways to stay hydrated in everyday life include:

- Take a water bottle to school and encourage kids to drink throughout the school day
- Drink 8-20oz of fluid with every meal and snack: mostly water and milk, with <6oz 100% juice/day
- Eat watery fruits and vegetables which include electrolytes: leafy greens, bell peppers, cucumbers, apples, bananas, berries, pineapple, etc.

How much and what type of fluid should a young athlete be consuming during a practice or event?

Encouraging regular intervals for drinking fluids during practices and events is important for proper hydration

- Pack 3 water bottles for practice (to drink before, during, and after practice)
- Take breaks during practices and encourage everyone to drink water
- Have all athletes drink water during breaks in competition (time outs, half time, substitutions, before and after heats)
- Wear sunscreen on all exposed skin during outdoor activities
- During Practice or Sporting Event:
 - <1 hour: drink 8-20 oz water every hour
 - >1 hour: drink 8-20 oz water and/or sports drink with 6-8% carbohydrate solution and electrolytes

How much fluid should be consumed after a practice or event?

It is important to replace all fluids lost after exercise. The best method to determine fluid loss is to weigh oneself before and after exercise. For every pound of weight loss (fluid loss) due to exercise, athletes should drink 16-24 oz of fluid. If a scale is not available, perform the urine test and drink fluids until urine is restored to light yellow (light lemonade).

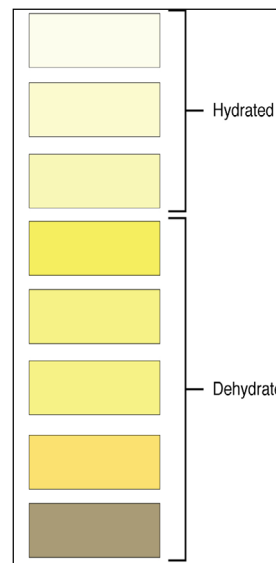


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