



## DRINK UP GUIDELINES

- Maintaining good hydration everyday enables better performance during competition and training.
- Clear/pale urine is a good indicator of appropriate hydration.
- Do not wait until you feel thirsty before you drink! Thirst is a poor indicator of fluid needs.
- Drink small amounts often. Once you are dehydrated it is harder for the body to absorb fluid so make the most of any breaks in play or activity for a top up in fluid.
- Always be prepared... bring some extra drinking water to all training sessions and competitions.



### SA Sports Medicine Association

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SASMA supports National Pharmacies as a destination for all sports health products.



The information in this brochure is of a general nature. Individual circumstances may require modification of general advice from an appropriate Health Professional eg. Doctor.

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A healthier you starts here

# DRINK UP



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## HYDRATION & PERFORMANCE

Good hydration during exercise is important for optimising performance and helping to decrease the risk of heat stress.

Perspiration is an important mechanism for cooling the body. Over time this results in significant fluid loss from the body, known as dehydration. High exercise intensity, as well as hot and humid conditions increases the rate of fluid loss and risk of dehydration.

**You cannot train yourself to avoid dehydration.** In fact a well-trained person starts to perspire earlier than someone who is not.

Dehydration can have an impact on physical and mental performance. Even at 2% of body weight loss through dehydration (1.5% in a 70kg person) a noticeable decrease in performance has been observed.

As dehydration becomes more severe, symptoms such as headache, nausea and faintness can result. There is also an increased risk of heat stress as the body can no longer effectively cool itself.

**Children are at increased risk of heat stress.**



## HOW MUCH FLUID DO I NEED?

**Everyone needs a different amount of fluid according to individual perspiration rates and environmental conditions.**

If you are serious about your hydration, it is best to see a Sports Dietitian for an individual fluid plan.

Weighing yourself before and after exercise or playing sport will allow you to assess your fluid requirements. The weight loss indicates your net fluid loss, eg: 1kg lost = 1 litre of fluid lost.

You should aim to minimise fluid loss to less than 2% of normal body weight – this can be achieved by drinking during exercise and competition.

The body continues to lose fluid after exercise, so you should aim to replace any fluid loss in the hours after exercise to restore hydration.

Weight gain can indicate fluid intake in excess of sweat loss, ie drinking too much water due to excess thirst. This should be avoided as it can cause a potentially dangerous condition called hyponatremia (low sodium concentration in the blood).

## WHAT TO DRINK?

**Water is best for most situations, particularly low intensity and short duration. Tap water is free, has no kilojoules and is good for your teeth.**

Sports drinks provide carbohydrate as well as sodium and potassium. This carbohydrate provides energy for prolonged activity, and has been proven to increase performance and delay fatigue. Choose a sports drink with a carbohydrate concentration of 6 – 8% for best results. Sports drinks also replace salts lost in sweat and aid in rehydration.

Some people have excess salt in their sweat and may benefit from additional rehydration agents – this should be discussed with your Sports Dietitian.

'Energy drinks' have varying levels of caffeine and sugar. These are **not** recommended for use during exercise.

## SAFETY

Injury through dehydration, heat and sun exposure can be prevented, and should be part of your pre-activity plan... so remember to BEAT THE HEAT and be SunSmart!

- Slip on some sun-protective clothing. Try to cover as much of your skin as possible.
- Slap on some sunscreen... make sure it's broad spectrum, water resistant SPF30 (or higher). Remember to put it on 20 minutes before you go outdoors and re-apply every 2 hours.
- Slap on a hat. To protect your face, head, neck and ears (preferably broad brimmed or legionnaires style).
- Seek shade. Stay in the shade as much as possible.
- Slide on some sunglasses... make sure they meet Australian Standards.

**Understand symptoms of heat injury or heat stroke. It is important you are aware of, and react quickly to the following symptoms of heat injury:**

- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Headache
- Confusion
- Light-headedness

If you experience any of the above symptoms you should stop activity, drink more fluids and cool down. If the symptoms do not improve rapidly, you should seek medical advice.

## EMERGENCY PLAN FOR DEHYDRATION

- Lie the affected person down.
- Loosen and remove excessive clothing.
- Cool them, by fanning their body.
- Give cool water to drink if conscious.
- Apply wrapped ice packs to groins and armpits.
- Seek medical assistance.

**For guidelines on cancelling and modifying events due to hot weather, refer to Hot Weather Guidelines and Wet Bulb Globe Temperature information available from: [www.sasma.com.au](http://www.sasma.com.au)**

