

Personal Training by Robert J. Bovee

Researched & Written by Robert J. Bovee Certified Master PPT, RTS, ETS, FTS, LMS, WMS, HWFS, SNS, SSCS, MES, E/FT, PSCS, PRCS

PROPER HYDRATION

Staying properly hydrated during exercise is essential to help you feel and perform to your best. Research shows that just a small loss of body weight, caused by dehydration, can place a strain on your body during exercise. One study showed that approximately half of all exercisers arrived at the gym inadequately hydrated before they even began their workout. Fortunately, you can prevent dehydration by understanding how much you need to drink in order to replace fluid loss during exercise.

The following information, provided by the Gatorade Sports Science Institution, can help you put together a smart hydration plan to get the most out of your workouts and active occasions.

1. SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION

Dehydration can impact how you feel and perform during a workout. Below are some of the most common signs to be aware of:

Signs of Dehydration	
• Noticeable thirst	• Headache
• Muscle cramps	• Nausea
• Weakness	• Fatigue
• Decreased performance	• Lightheaded & feeling dizziness
• Difficulty paying attention	

You can also check the color of your urine first thing in the morning to determine your hydration status. If the color of your urine looks more like the color of lemonade (light or clear), that is a sign of good hydration. If the color of your urine looks more like the color of apple juice (dark or dense), that is a signal that you should ingest more fluids.

2. DRINK TO PREVENT DEHYDRATION

The rapid loss of body weight that can occur during a workout is not fat loss, its fluid loss from sweating. In other words, it's dehydration.

When you lose weight during exercise, you're losing fluids that your body needs in order to function properly. The best step is to drink enough during your workout to minimize the weight loss.

Smart hydration plan takes into consideration your sweat loss and how much fluid you'll need to drink in order to replace that sweat loss. An easy way to determine this is to pay attention to the difference in body weight before and after exercise.

Determine Your Sweat Loss

Weigh yourself before and after you workout.

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If you weigh less after your workout:

- Drink more during future workouts with the goal of finishing your workout within **2%** of your starting weight. For example, a **130-lb** female should drink enough during exercise to keep her body weight between **127.5** and **130-lbs** after her workout.

If you weigh more after your workout:

- Drink less during your next workout.

3. BEVERAGE CHOICES FOR ACTIVE PEOPLE

With all the different hydration beverages on the market, it's important to understand what types and how much of which ingredients you should look for in a beverage to help your hydration needs. The following continuum helps explain the difference between beverage options and what to look for.

Additional Electrolytes		Electrolytes At least 70 mg of sodium per 8 oz	particularly sodium (200 mg per 8 oz)
		Carbohydrates 14 – 17 grams per 8 oz	Carbohydrates 14 – 17 grams per 8 oz
Flavor		Flavor	Flavor
Fluid	Fluid	Fluid	Fluid
Plain Water	Fitness Water	Sport Drink	Specialized sports Drinks

- **PLAIN WATER** is a great thirst quencher and is essential for all bodily functions. During sedentary or light-active occasions, water can meet your hydration needs. However, during any activity that causes you to work up a sweat, water's great thirst-quenching properties and its lack of taste and flavor can make it challenging for active people to drink enough to stay properly hydrated. In fact, research shows that active people tend to replenish only about half of the fluids they lose during a workout when they drink only plain water.
- **FITNESS WATER** is a lightly flavored hydration alternative to plain water that tends to be low in calories and a great option for people who typically drink plain water during a workout or through out the day. Research shows that physically active people often drink more of a lightly flavored beverage than they will of plain water, helping them to improve their fluid intake and maintain proper hydration. For those who want a beverage that closely resembles water in calorie content, look for flavored fitness water that contains no more than **10** calories per **8** oz.
- **SPORTS DRINKS** are ideal for active people who want to replace what they lose in sweat and supply their muscles with fuel during a workout, training or a race.

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When you sweat, you lose more than just water – you also lose electrolytes, particularly sodium, the most critical electrolyte lost and a key component in hydration. When exercising intensely for longer than **45** minutes, it's important to replace what you lose in sweat to maintain proper re-hydration and after exercise, sports drinks containing sodium will further help promote re-hydration. When selecting a sports drink for intense exercise, look for at least 70 mg of sodium per **8** oz serving, which is what the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) suggests to help stimulate thirst, increase voluntary intake maintain fluid balance and ensure sufficient hydration.

In addition to sodium, a properly formulated sports drink should also include the right amount of carbohydrates (the primary and most important energy source for the body during exercise) to fuel working muscles, fight fatigue and provide sweetness. It has been demonstrated through research that sports drinks with a carbohydrate level of about **6%** (approximately **14 – 15** g of simple sugars per **8** oz serving) are absorbed as fast as water and supply enough energy to help improve performance.

- **SPECIALIZED SPORTS DRINKS** with additional sodium are appropriate for athletes training and/or participating in endurance activities (such as a marathon or triathlon), as fluid and electrolyte stores are depleted – specifically sodium, these losses can become substantial over an extended period of intense activity. An endurance athlete can lose almost three times the amount of his daily recommended sodium intake during a marathon or long-distance triathlon. If you need the hydration benefits of a sports drink that has a higher sodium content, look for about **200** mg per **8** oz serving.

For more information, please contact Robert J. Bovee at **(585) 330-0614**.