HYDRATE the RITE way

SCOTTISH RITE FOR CHILDREN SPORTS MEDICINE

HYDRATION TIPS FOR YOUNG ATHLETES

Hydration for Everyday

Staying hydrated is an important part of staying healthy. Use these guidelines from the Institute of Medicine to determine about how much fluid is right for you each day. While these guidelines are helpful, your unique fluid needs may be higher or lower.

Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI)

Age (years)	Boys	Girls
4-8	7 cups (56 oz.)	7 cups (56 oz.)
9-13	10 cups (80 oz.)	13-14 cups (110 oz.)
14-19	8-9 cups (70 oz.)	9-10 cups (76 oz.)

1 cup = 8 ounces (oz.)

Hydration for Young Athletes

Fluid needs vary based on age, gender, weight and genetics. For young athletes, other factors like stage of development, activity type, duration and intensity come into play. For some, the amount of sweat or composition of sweat may also affect how much and what type of fluid is needed. Most importantly, you need a hydration plan that works for you.

Don't Wait to Hydrate!

Here are a few tips to get you started:

- Choose a fun water bottle.
- Add high water content foods to your meals to make hydrating fun.
- Drink fluids throughout the day.
- Do not drink a large volume of fluid right before an event.
  - This may not fully hydrate or rehydrate you.
  - This may cause stomach discomfort or an extra trip to the restroom during the event.
- Drink plenty of fluids during and after the event.
- Learn what works for different activities.
- Don't over-hydrate, excessive fluid intake above needs can also put the athlete's health at risk.

A General Hydration Strategy for Sport

A hydration strategy is generally beneficial in extreme temperatures or climates and for **durations greater than an hour**. Many collegiate and professional athletes use body weight changes during practices as a way to determine fluid needs during and after events. This is not necessary or appropriate for most activities for children and teens. Use the following as a general guideline when creating a hydration plan on your own.

BEFORE

Drink with and in-between meals and snacks throughout the day

2 to 4 hours before: 5 to 10 mL/kg body weight

DURING

***9-12 years:** 3-8 ounces every 15-20 minutes*

***12-18 years:** 34-50 ounces every hour*

AFTER

Drink right after the event and with meals and snacks following the event

Based on American College of Sports Medicine's Position Stand on Nutrition & Athletic Performance

Conditions That Can Increase Fluid Needs

It is important to realize that certain conditions can increase an athlete's fluid needs. These conditions may increase sweat rates, alter the body's ability to cool itself, and increase the body's core temperature:

- *Hot environment*
- *Altitude*
- *Duration of activity*
- *Humidity*
- *Sport played*
- *Clothing*

When More than Water is Needed

Water is the first choice for hydration but sometimes a sports drink or adding a salty snack is necessary to replace sodium and other electrolytes lost through sweat and to provide energy from carbohydrates. After puberty, an athlete may sweat more and therefore, replacing electrolytes becomes more important.

Salty Snack Ideas

- *Sports drinks (6-8% carbohydrate)*
- *Pretzels or salty crackers*
- *Cheese*
- *Pickles*
- *Broth-based soup or vegetable juice*

A sports drink or salty snack may be appropriate in the following situations:

- High intensity activities lasting longer than an hour
- Tournaments and back-to-back events
- Hot conditions, indoors or outdoors
- Having salt on the skin or clothes after activity

Signs & Symptoms of Dehydration

If your young athlete is experiencing any of the following signs and symptoms, he or she may be dehydrated, and a hydration strategy may be needed.

- Fatigue early in the game or practice
- Decreased / poor performance
- Headache
- Not sweating when usually a normal or heavy sweater
- Overheating
- Difficulty focusing
- Urine that is dark in color, like apple juice
- Urine that is low in volume

Signs and Symptoms of Heat Illness

Heat illness is a preventable condition. Dehydration is an early sign of heat illness. Respond quickly if you notice these signs:

- Weakness
- Vomiting
- Excessive thirst
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Sweating
- Nausea
- Light-headedness

Need Help Planning?

With practice, a young athlete should learn what hydration strategy works best for training and competition. Reach out to a medical provider, the school's athletic trainer or a certified sports dietitian for personalized recommendations if needed.

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Visit **scottishriteforchildren.org/nutrition** to learn more about hydration and nutrition for young athletes.