

# The Story about Fluids - How to Stay Hydrated

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One of the most important aspects of preparing, training and recovery is a hydration strategy.

What are you going to drink and how much?

Taking fluid on board during training is one of the most effective ways of enhancing your performance. Fluids are lost in sweat and how much you sweat will depend on your size, temperature on the day, clothing you are wearing, and how hard you are exercising. Sweat rates vary a lot but when sweat loss is not matched by fluid intake, dehydration will occur. Hot days can obviously result in greater fluid loss but can also occur in the cooler months.

## Staying hydrated is key to your performance but what are some good fluid tips when training?

- Begin your exercise session hydrated, drink well before you start
- Take a drink bottle with you to training! Drinking from the water fountain will not get the job done.
- Thirst is not a good indicator of hydration, don't wait until this happens
- Drink at regular intervals - around every 15 minutes and try to consume a couple of mouthfuls each time. When your coach asks you to take a drink break - make sure you do so.
- Water is the most practical and economical fluid. Cool water is better absorbed and is more refreshing and palatable. On hot days during intense training sessions, it may be suitable to use an electrolyte replacement drink such as Aqualyte or Hydralyte. Both of these can be found in the pharmacy and supermarket and it is a simple matter of adding the tablet to your water bottle without any added sugar.

## What about recovery?

Fluid recovery is essential to peak performance and wellbeing. You can check your fluid loss by monitoring your weight before and after training. The difference between the two is fluid loss and you should aim to replace 125-150% of this loss over the next 2-6 hours. So, if you lost 1 kg in weight you will need to drink 1250-1500 ml to fully rehydrate.

## What type of fluid?

Water is the best recovery fluid in combination with food but if food is not available in the short term, try plain or flavoured milk or an electrolyte/carbohydrate beverage such as Aqualyte or Hydralyte.