

# Hydration and Performance:

## What you need to know from OhioHealth Sports Medicine

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There are multiple factors that lead to an athlete's success. Whether it is the countless hours spent on the training field or in the weight room, or the hours spent training on your own, there is one factor that athlete's often neglect: hydration.

Hydration plays a key role in your body's ability to perform at a high level. Hydration affects many factors related to performance including regulating body temperature, allowing organs such as the liver to produce energy needed to play, and allowing the brain to process information at a fast rate. Regardless of playing in a warm or cold environment, maintaining proper levels of hydration is key.

**Here are some practical tips for before, during and after practices to help you maintain proper levels of hydration:**

### 1. Before practice begins

- a. Eat and drink normal meal
- b. Consume extra fluids the night before
- c. Consume 20-25 oz of a sports drink **WITH** sodium 2 hours prior to practice
- d. Consume another 10 oz of a sports drink **WITH** sodium 15 minutes prior to practice

### 2. During practice

- a. Match fluid losses- this can be achieved by knowing your sweat rate. Any OhioHealth Sports Medicine professional can assist you in calculating what your sweat rate is.
- b. Know your environmental factors. Competing in warm **AND** cold climates can lead to dehydration. Once dehydrated, your body cannot perform at optimal levels.



# Tips to maintain hydration *continued*

## 3. Post practice

- a. Replace lost fluids within 2 hours, **avoid caffeine**
- b. Consume a healthy meal within 2 hours, **avoid greasy foods**

## 4. Water versus sports beverages

- a. Sports drinks such as PowerAde and Gatorade should be consumed when:
  - Exercise is intense and rigorous
  - Exercise lasts longer than 50 minutes
  - When multiple training sessions occur in one day

It is important that both sports drinks and water are consumed due to sodium lost in a person's sweat. Sodium plays an important role in maintaining proper levels of hydration, as it will hold water in the body. Sports drinks also contain carbohydrates, which are critical to providing the energy that athletes need to be successful. Salt tablets are not considered a safe way to supplement sodium losses. The sodium contained in our natural diets and that are found in sports drinks are enough to replenish what we lose while sweating.

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