CATA Calls On Coaches, Therapists, Parents and Active Canadians to Adopt Recommended Hydration Strategy

Leading Sports Experts Confirm Sports Drinks Beneficial for Active Athletes

The Canadian Athletic Therapists Association (CATA), Canada's largest and most influential association of professional athletic therapists and students, is calling on coaches, althletic therapists and trainers to be on the lookout for the signs of dehydration.

In response to growing concerns about the dangers of dehydration, the CATA has developed a scientifically validated hydration checklist for coaches, athletic therapists, trainers and active competitors to help ensure Canadian athletes maximize performance and stay healthy this summer.

During summer exercise, the risk of heat-related illness is increased. Look out for the warning signs of dehydration and heat exhaustion:

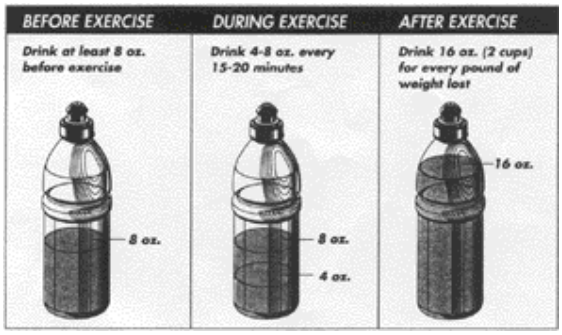
- Thirst
- Irritability
- Headache
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Cramps
- Nausea
- Decreased performance

Be Aware of the Effects of Dehydration

- ✓ Dehydration can affect an athlete's performance in less than an hour of exercise – sooner if the athlete begins the session dehydrated
- ✓ Dehydration of just 1% - 2% of body weight (only 1.5 – 3 lbs. for a 150 lb. athlete) can negatively influence performance
- ✓ Dehydration of greater than 3% of body weight increases an athlete's risk of heat illness (heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat stroke)

CATA Recommended Hydration Strategy

Proper hydration helps athletes stay healthy and maintain a high level of performance.



It is important to choose beverages that taste good, provide energy without slowing fluid absoption and replace fluid and electrolytes.

Thirst is not an accurate measure of the body's need for fluid.

By the time athletes feel thirsty it is too late, they have already lost needed fluids and electrolytes and may be dehydrated.

- ✓ If exercise lasts more than 45-50 minutes – or is intense – a sports drink containing carbohydrates should be consumed during the activity
- ✓ The carbohydrate concentration in the ideal fluid replacement solution should be in the range of 6% to 8% (g/100 ml) which is absorbed faster than beverages with higher carbohydrate levels
- ✓ Fluids with salt (sodium chloride) increase thirst and voluntary fluid intake while replenishing the amount lost through sweat
- ✓ Cool beverages at temperatures of 10°C to 15°C

Not All Drinks Are Created Equal

Fruit juices, sodas and some sports drinks have CHO concentrations greater than 8% and are not recommended during an exercise session as the sole beverage. The optimal beverage for fluid and energy replacement is a 6% carbohydrate-electrolyte solution.

CATA

The hydration research and recommendations are from the National Athletic Trainers' Association Position Statement: *Fluid Replacement for Athletes*, published in the June 2000 issue of the *Journal of Athletic Training*. The Canadian Athletic Therapists Association supports this statement. The complete position statement can be viewed at http://www.nata.org/downloads/jat/jt0200/jt020000212p.pdf