

Hot-weather advice from HEHF:

Replace fluids lost from exercise

During heavy exercise, the athlete's body relies on sweating to remove the tremendous amount of heat produced.

It is not unusual for endurance athletes to sweat off 2 to 4 quarts of water per hour during an event. On a warm day, a runner can lose a cup of water every mile. Failing to replace it can result in dangerous dehydration and even heat stroke — especially in hot summer weather.

Fluids to the rescue

To keep from dangerously overheating, athletes need to replace fluids as they are lost. To keep pace, you should drink:

- at least two-and-a-half cups — or 20 ounces — of fluid every two hours before an event
- two more cups 10 to 15 minutes before the event
- one half to one cup every 15 minutes during the event
- more fluids after the event until weight lost during the event is regained.

Recommended fluids

Plain water is excellent for replacing lost fluids. Fruit juices may be used to provide energy as well as fluid replacement — provided they are diluted to no more than 10 percent sugar, usually by mixing the juice with an equal amount of water.

Sports drinks that are below 10 percent sugar are also acceptable. Fluids may be chilled to help cool the body. Contrary to popular belief, chilled fluids do not cause stomach cramps or overheating, and they actually enter the system faster than warm fluids.

Avoiding dehydration

During an event, follow these guidelines for fluid intake, whether you are thirsty or not. Avoid coffee, tea or alcohol, which actually rob the body of fluids. Stay away from salt tablets unless your physician recommends them.

Learn to recognize the danger signs of dehydration and heat injury:

- chills
- a throbbing pressure in the head
- shakiness
- nausea
- dry skin
- disorientation
- lack of urination within an hour after the event.

Getting enough fluids during exercise will help you stay safe and healthy and turn in your best possible performance. For more information, contact the Hanford Environmental Health Foundation at 373-3729 or via e-mail to *HEHF Health Education Services. ♦