

Helpful Hydration Hints

*Football players should begin working on hydration one month prior to “Hell Week”. Get in the habit of drinking larger volumes of fluid. Start each day with 8-12 oz fluid, drink fluids at every meal, and drink fluids before, during and after exercise.

*Kids will drink more of a sport drink than water. So, compared to water on hot days, sports drinks are better (as the player will stop drinking water much sooner than a sports drink). Diluting sports drinks with water or just plain water may be an option especially for athletes with weight problems. Sports drinks have an advantage over water in that they provide necessary fluid, fuel (carbohydrates), and electrolytes (sodium). During activities, energy drinks as well as anything with caffeine should be avoided.

*Encourage gulps instead of sips (especially during exercise) to insure proper fluid volume

*Ideally, players should weigh themselves before and after practice especially those players who consistently need to replace fluids after practice because of weight loss during practice.

*Fluids should be chilled and easily accessible; bring water bottles or jugs with players name on them; players should use shade and remove helmets during water breaks whenever possible.

*A cold wet cotton T-shirt under pads in hot weather can reduce heat loss; consider ice-cold towels.

*Athletes that vomit during football practice—a majority of the time it is because the athlete is not accustomed to drinking this much fluid volume; use the beginning of summer and preconditioning session to get used to these larger volumes of fluid.

*Athletes with “heat or exertion” headaches—recommend strict hydration using sports drinks like Gatorade (rather than water) and pre practice snack like a granola bar, protein/sports bar, cheese, fig newtons, bagel or nuts 30-60 minutes prior to activity. Some may need Advil or Motrin in addition.

*Athletes with anxiety and hyperventilation—often, proper hydration helps along with preconditioning.

*Athletes with frequent muscle cramps—recommend sports drinks (rather than water); stretch well; sodium/salt intake may need to be increased.

*You should not exercise if you’ve had an illness or a fever recently.

*Report to your coach or medical staff if your athlete has any warning signs or symptoms of heat illness including headache, nausea, weakness, dizziness, profuse sweating, drowsiness, confusion or irrational behavior.



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Proper Hydration for Football

Before Activity

*Start each day by drinking 8-16 oz fluid, and drink fluid at every meal

*Before practice

<90 pounds: drink 3-6 oz fluid 1 hour prior to practice

>90 pounds: drink 6-12 oz fluid 1 hour prior to practice

High School: drink 17-20 oz fluid 2-3 hours prior to practice and
7-10 oz fluid 20 minutes prior to practice

During Activity

* <90 pounds: drink 5 oz fluid every 15-20 minute break or 15-20 oz/hour

* >90 pounds: drink 9 oz fluid every 15-20 minute break or 27-36 oz/hour

* High School: drink 7-10 oz fluid every 15-20 minute break or 28-40 oz/hour

After Activity

*General replenishment (drink this amount during first hour after practice)

<90 pounds: 8 oz fluid

>90 pounds: 12 oz fluid

*General rule for weight loss during practice or game—drink 16 oz fluid for every pound of body weight loss within 2 hours of activity

Fluids before activity are generally water while during and after activity may be Sports Drink, water, or Sports Drink diluted with water depending on need.

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