



A person's body is made up of, approximately, 75% water. An average person should drink at least 8-10, 8 ounce glasses of water per day. Athletes require more. The water should be good, clean, water.

Some experts believe that an athlete's performance is directly related to their level of hydration or dehydration. The better the body is hydrated, the better they will be able to perform at a high level.

Most athletes are not aware of the effects dehydration has on performance:

- Increase in heart rate – causes needless fatigue
- Increase in body temperature – can endanger your health
- Increase perception of effort - you feel like you are working harder than you are
- Decrease in motivation – you will want to quit

In soccer, dehydration translates into:

- Decreased speed, passing/shooting
- Decreased dribbling and focusing ability
- Possible muscle cramping

Some causes of dehydration symptoms are:

- The use of diuretics or other medications that cause loss of fluid
- Over exertion without the replenishing of fluids
- Hot, dry or windy climate
- Chlorination, fluoridated water
- Consumption of soda pop.

Research shows that a loss of as little as 1-2% of body weight during exercise/competition is likely to impair performance.

Hydration should be maintained at all times. Extra attention to hydration is required during heavy exercise. Two days before competition athletes should focus on drinking extra water. There are also certain foods that will help with hydration. Fruits and vegetables are mostly water and should be a regular part of your diet. Avoid soda pop and sugary drinks.

Symptoms of dehydration:

- Tired, wanting to sleep in the afternoon
- Always hungry
- Rough, dry skin
- Sudden weight loss
- Dry mucous membranes
- Weak, irregular rapid heart beat
- Lack of energy, fatigue
- Low blood pressure
- Rapid and shallow breathing

