



HYDRATION, HEAT AND WATER BOTTLE GUIDELINES

Performance

- Avoid heat stress and poor performance by adequate fluid replacement during Rugby League activities
- Exercise in hot or humid weather will result in additional fluid loss and increase the risk of dehydration. Even small degrees of dehydration will cause a decrease in exercise performance.
- Dehydration contributes to fatigue and may make the player susceptible to cramps, heat stress and heat stroke.
- Children are at much greater risk of heat stroke.

Drink Up!

- Drink plenty of fluids. Don't wait to feel thirsty; thirst is a poor indicator of fluid needs.
- Although water replaces fluids, sports drinks (containing 4 – 8% carbohydrate and small amounts of electrolytes) provide:
 - Additional energy from carbohydrates, which can delay fatigue and enhance performance, especially during prolonged events.
 - Salts (electrolytes), which aid the re-hydration process.
- Flavored drinks such as sports drinks and low concentration cordial, as a result of their taste, may encourage fluid consumption more than plain water.
- Cool drinks may be absorbed more rapidly than warmer fluids.

Drink Up Routine

- Avoid starting activities dehydrated. Drink plenty of water for several hours prior. A well-hydrated athlete should be able to pass a good volume of clear urine in the hour before participation.
- Drink at least 500ml (2 – 3 glasses) ½ to 1 hour before exercise.
- Drink at least 200 ml (1 glass) every 10 – 15 minutes during exercise.
- During exercise take advantage of all breaks in play to take a drink.
- After exercise drink liberally to ensure that you are fully re-hydrated.

Drink/Water Bottles

- THE SHARING OF DRINK/WATER BOTTLES IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.
- The most common way of infectious diseases spreading is by common use of drink/water containers or sharing anything hand to mouth. This applies especially in the training and playing arena.

How Much Fluid?

The athletes weighing themselves before and after exercise can assess fluid requirements.

- Each kilogram of weight lost = 1 litre of fluid deficit.
- Aim to keep these fluid losses to a minimum by drinking before, regularly during and then after exercise.
- Sweating and fluid losses continue after exercise. Aim to replace at least 1.5 times the amount of fluid deficit, measured at the end of exercise.

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Other Ways to Beat the Heat

- Wear light clothing – light in color, light in weight.
- Wear a 30+ sunscreen to prevent skin damage and skin cancer.
- Where appropriate for the activities involved, wear a hat and sunglasses to protect the eyes.

Symptoms of Heat Injury or Heat Stroke

Be aware of and react quickly to the following symptoms of heat injury:

- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Headache
- Confusion
- Light headedness

Emergency Treatment Plan

- Lie the victim down
- Loosen and remove excessive clothing – cool by fanning
- Give cool water to drink if conscious
- Apply wrapped ice packs to groins and armpits
- SEEK MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Reference: Smartplay – Sports Medicine Australia - Drink Up, Beat the Heat brochure.