

KEEP COOL AND FUELED

Your body is a furnace, generating heat as it burns energy. To lose heat, you sweat. However, sweating is a two-edged sword – as sweat evaporates, it cools you, but it also drains you of water and salt. Salt depletion and dehydration will cause you to cramp and increases the risk of heat illness. To avoid cramping and heat illness:

- **DON'T RELY ON THIRST.** By the time you feel thirsty, you're already getting dehydrated. **Drink before you're thirsty.**
- **DRINK ON A SCHEDULE.**
Before game/practice: drink 2-3 cups of Gatorade. *Cramp prone athlete: drink 20 oz. Gatorade mixed with 1 packet GatorLytes.
During the game/practice: drink at least ½ to 1 cup (8-16 gulps) of Gatorade every 15-20 minutes to off-set sweat losses. (1 gulp = ½ oz.)
At the half: drink 2 cups of Gatorade. Studies show that soccer players sprint faster in the second half of the game when they consume a sports drink.
After practice: drink 2-3 cups of Gatorade for every pound lost as sweat.
- **DRINK A SPORTS DRINK. Water is a thirst quencher – not a rehydrator.** When you drink water, thirst shuts off before you are hydrated. Sports drinks increase your drive to drink and provide fluid, energy, sodium, and potassium to help replace losses in sweat. Sports drinks keep you hydrated and enhance performance.
- **KEY ON MEALS.** Re-hydrate at meals. Fill 3 or 4 large cups with water, juice, fruit smoothie, milk, or sports drink. Eat plenty of fruits and veggies that are high in water. *Cramp prone athlete: salt your food. Include 1-2 salty snacks in-between meals like goldfish, pretzels, crackers, or popcorn.
- **AVOID CAFFEINE AND ALCOHOL.** Both promote urine production and tend to dehydrate you. Protein supplements in high doses may do the same.
- **KNOW THE RISKS.** Besides not drinking enough fluids, the risk of cramping and heat illness is increased by lack of sleep, fever, vomiting, or diarrhea. Certain drugs also pose a risk. For example, stimulants rev up the body's metabolism and heat production.
- **KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS OF HEAT ILLNESS.** They can include: dizziness or lightheadedness, muscle cramping, weakness, and nausea. If a player has any of these symptoms get medical attention immediately. Cool first, transport second.

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*Cramp-prone athletes should be monitored by a health care professional.