



healthyfood@sport

Hydration for Active Children – Fact Sheet

FLUIDS FOR SPORT

Dehydration is a common problem among young active people who play sports. You cannot train your body to get used to dehydration. Fluid losses of just 2% can impair performance, endurance, recovery, concentration, co-ordination, skill and decision making. You will not necessarily feel thirsty at this point. You cannot always rely on thirst as an accurate gauge of your fluid needs, especially in hot and humid conditions.

EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION:

- Dizziness and light headedness
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea
- Headaches
- Inability to concentrate

SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION AFTER THE GAME:

- Dark urine and infrequent urination
- Dry mouth and throat
- A feeling of extreme heat that remains after a cool down period

WATER IS THE BEST CHOICE

- Sip regularly on water throughout the day - Always have your own water bottle on hand to sip from during drink breaks and when watching play.
- Keep fluids cool which promotes a greater volume of intake.

Milk may also be appropriate. It provides fluid, carbohydrate for energy and protein for muscle repair.

Sports drinks may be useful on hot game days and for players who sweat heavily. Remember sports drinks contribute to your overall energy intake, so be careful not to over use, particularly if most of your activity has been standing (e.g. fielding). Even in active people sports drinks can contribute to excess energy intake. Sports drinks tend to only be required for junior players on extremely hot days or where more than one game is played in a day (carnivals/tournaments etc).

Avoid fizzy (carbonated) drinks before, during and after sport. Bloating associated with the drinks can leave you feeling full before sufficient fluid has been consumed. These drinks are also high in sugar which means the fluids aren't absorbed as quickly. Fizzy drinks can contribute to excess energy intake and can be damaging to dental health.

