

Performance Hydration

Athlete Scenario

As a defensive specialist in volleyball, I must be ready to move very quickly on the court. If I drink water during a match, I feel bloated and uncomfortable but if I don't drink water, I get headaches and feel tired quickly. How can I balance drinking water and working out to help me feel comfortable and perform better instead of being distracted from the game?

Goals of Performance Hydration:

- Delay fatigue and maintain mental acuity
- Optimize ability to regulate body heat, especially in hot environments
- Satisfy thirst and prevent significant weight loss from sweating
- Improve ability to recover quickly from training and competition

Hydration Strategies:

- Begin exercise well-hydrated since most athletes find it challenging to match fluid intake to sweat loss while exercising.
- Prevent under or over consumption of fluids while training longer than 30-60 minutes, by following an individualized hydration plan based on fluid loss calculations.
- If training is intense or involves intervals, consume carbohydrate in the form of sports drinks or snacks (see Eating During Exercise Factsheet).
- For events lasting longer than an hour (tournaments, multiple games on the same day), enhance hydration by selecting snacks and meals that contain salt or sodium.



Tips to Take With You

1. Monitor urine color prior to training to ensure good hydration status. Clear to pale yellow colored urine is optimal.
2. Experiment during training to identify the volume of fluid to drink that feels comfortable and allows you to perform at your best.
3. Consult a sports dietitian to develop a personalized hydration schedule to meet your fluid needs.

Contact SCAN

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Written by SCAN registered dietitians (RDs) to provide nutrition guidance. The key to optimal meal planning is individualization. Contact a SCAN RD for personalized nutrition plans. Access "Find a SCAN RD" at www.scandpg.org or by phone at 800.249.2875.