

Hydration is Key

Many of you have heard that a great deal of the human body is made up of water. The amount of the body that is comprised of water is somewhere between 40 and 70 percent. Also, 65 to 75 percent of the body's muscle mass comes from water. It is impossible to deny that water is an important component to the functioning of the body's systems. In regard to exercise, dehydration can hinder performance greatly when a high intensity level is attempted beyond one minute in duration. Without proper use of hydration during exercise, you can expect your body's ability to carry out endurance exercise to decline steadily.

Adequate water consumption aids the body in staying cool during exercise by absorbing the heat from the exercise environment, as well as the heat created by your body as you exercise. This becomes particularly important when exercising outdoors in warm climates. In such cases, remaining well hydrated can help defend against heat related illness such as heat cramps, and heat stroke. Have you ever stepped on a scale after an exercise session and noticed you have lost weight during the course of your workout? The source of this rapid weight loss is water that has left the body during exercise. For each pound of body weight lost during an exercise session, 15 ounces of water is lost.

Not only is it important to replace fluids lost at the end of a workout, preparations should be made before a workout regarding your body's hydration. In order to keep the metabolic systems of the body working smoothly to provide energy for exercise, fluids should be taken into the body leading up to a planned exercise session. It is recommended that a person drink 14 to 22 ounces of fluid 2 to 3 hours before exercise, 5 to 10 ounces about 30 minutes before exercise, and up to 33 ounces of water during and after the exercise bout. It is also beneficial to take in small amounts of sodium during the rehydration process. Sports drinks typically contain electrolytes, which provide an adequate replacement of the necessary minerals lost during exercise.

As you look forward to days spent outside enjoying the sunshine and warm temperatures, please remember to stay hydrated. Remember that adequate water intake can both keep you safe in the heat, and keep your body's energy systems functioning well for more effective workouts.

Happy hydrating!

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