



## Hydration Drink Early and Often.

Why should swimmers drink fluids?

1. to stay hydrated
2. to provide the body with fuel.

### **During Your Practice:**

All swimmers need fluids **during practice** to stay hydrated. You still sweat in the pool! Take a couple of sips from the water bottle every 15-20 minutes. If you are already thirsty, you are dehydrated. Drink before you are thirsty!

A practice that lasts 90 minutes or more will need extra fuel. A sports drink can provide fuel, but swimmers will still need to think about hydration. Drinks that are too strong, or “concentrated,” can provide the fuel but also inhibit fluid absorption and often lead to cramping.

Drinks that are 6-8% carbohydrate are good to drink during practice. They will provide enough carbohydrate to fuel your practice, but not so much that will inhibit fluid absorption. A couple of sips every 15-20 minutes will keep the body fueled, helps prevent unnecessary tissue breakdown, and maintains hydration. Most other drinks are too strong to be effective *during* workout.

### **After Your Practice:**

Water is the best choice to replenish fluids after practice. Replenishing fuel stores is equally important. Competitive swimmers need to begin to replenish their fuel within the first half-hour.

A sports drink is easily digested and quickly absorbed and can be a convenient way to get some of this fuel within the first 20 – 30 minutes. Accelerade or Endurox will do the trick. Beware of the high protein drinks, you will not get the carbohydrate you need. A little protein can help by supporting tissue repair and re-building processes. But too much protein, especially when it comes *in place of* carbohydrate, may actually be detrimental to the post-workout recovery process.

### **All Day Long:**

Staying hydrated during the day is just as critical as hydrating during and after workouts. You can do this by consuming a variety of fluids throughout the day - water, fruit juice, milk, soups, etc, etc. The key to a healthy diet is variety. Water should be your first choice, but other drinks will be alright as well.