

Water or Sport Drinks

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Fluid replacement is vital for athletes or anybody who is alive and breathing. In this article I discuss fluid replacement to replenish the body.

Water. Water is most important for several reasons. For one, water is abundant and around everywhere in the continental USA. In most cases it is free. Experts believe water to be the most important nutrient to all bodies, second only to the air we breathe. Some other important functions of water are that: it is needed to maintain homeostasis, it is the most abundant solvent or medium in the human body, it is important in regulating cell volume, nutrient transport, waste removal, and body temperature, it is distributed both in intra- and intercellular compartments, accounts for up to 80% of our body weight at birth, and up to 70% of our adult body weight.

People who work out and or lose water or sweat via workouts may need to replace more of this fluid. Researchers believe it depends on several factors. These factors include climate, age, exercise level, and body weight to determine the appropriate amounts of water needed daily. For instance, if you sweat more profusely or more than someone older, younger, bigger, or smaller, you may need to drink more water. Two other examples are people exercising at high altitudes and people exercising at elevated or hot environments. These folks may lose more water via sweat, thus requiring more water replacement. Everyone's body is different, but all bodies need water.

Proper hydration should begin before you begin to exercise, while you are exercising, and after exercise is complete. Here are some suggestions:

- drink 17 to 20 oz of water 2 to 3 hours before exercise
- drink 7 to 10 oz of water 10 to 20 minutes before exercise
- drink 7 to 10 oz of water every 10 to 20 minutes during activity
- if you sweat heavily, you may need to drink more

Experts have not determined how much water everyone needs because everyone is different. All of the experts suggest by the time you are thirsty due to exercising you may already be dehydrated.

Sport Drinks. There are several sport drinks that replenish the body with electrolytes. These drinks and others like them, (read the labels to find what the drinks contain) are known to keep the body from overheating. They are also like water and also supply the body with the electrolytes potassium, magnesium, calcium, and sodium to provide energy during intense workouts (water does not replace these energy sources). Sport drinks may be considered an enhancement over water as a body temperature regulator and fluid replacement drink for the aforementioned reasons.

It is interesting to note that most sport drinks, if not all, have flavors. This is done; perhaps, to make certain you drink the appropriate amounts of the drinks and or a marketing ploy. Sometimes people drink till they are not thirsty which may or may not replace or hydrate the body fully. Most sport drinks with flavor tend to make folks drink more thus hydrating the body fully. Unlike most waters, sport drinks are not free.

Super Sport Drinks. Super sport drinks tend to add to what water and sport drinks already have. Some of the ingredients in super sport drinks may include: choline, creatine, protein, carbohydrates, & antioxidants (again, it is important to read the labels). Most of these drinks are designed for endurance athletes or sports they may perform for hours on end. The body tends to lose more energy and other nutrients when workouts are longer or of the endurance nature.

Super sport drinks are also known to help muscle recovery. Soreness that results from overuse of body or muscles may be relieved if super sports drinks are employed within half an hour after intense exercising.

Caffeine Drinks. Drinks like coffee or colas may not replace fluids in the short or long run. In fact, these drinks are known to be diuretics and can even have a laxative effect. Although most of these drinks are water like and water is the main source of fluid in them, they appear to do more damage as a fluid replacement drink than water. Caffeine drinks also do not replenish any of the electrolyte stores the body loses during sweating.

Understanding why & how fluid replacement may enhance your workouts is important. This paper briefly alluded to suggestions that may help you on your quest to effectively and efficiently replenish your body with fluids.