



# Proper Hydration IS CRITICAL to Your Athletes' Safety



## Implementing a 4-Step Hydration Plan

is easy – and critical to protect your players from early fatigue and heat illness.

### Step 1 Asses Athletes' Hydration Needs

You can use a Locker Room Weight & Hydration Chart or the Online Fluid Loss Calculator at [www.gatorade.com](http://www.gatorade.com) to monitor sweat loss and determine your athletes' fluid needs.

- Each athlete should record his or her body weight before and after practice and games. The loss of more than a pound or two indicates dehydration and inadequate drinking.
- Color of athlete's urine can indicate hydration status. Urine the color of lemonade usually means a player is well hydrated; urine the color of apple juice often signals dehydration.

### Step 2 Start Drinking

Athletes stay better hydrated with a properly formulated sports drink that contains electrolytes, like Gatorade, as opposed to water alone. When working hard, encourage your athletes to follow these estimated drinking recommendations:<sup>1</sup>

- 2-3 hours before practice or games, drink 17-20 oz.
- 10-15 minutes before, drink another 7-10 oz.
- Every 10-15 minutes during activity, drink another 7-10 oz.

### Step 3 Keep Drinking for Quick Recovery

Rehydration after practice or games is just as important to reduce risk of early fatigue and heat illness in subsequent practices or events.

Within 2 hours of every practice or game, athletes should drink 20-24 oz. for every pound of body weight lost through sweat.<sup>2</sup>

### Step 4 Be Alert

It's important, for your athlete's safety, to always watch for warning signs of significant dehydration.

- Intense thirst
- Muscle cramps
- Weakness
- Decreased performance
- Headache
- Nausea
- Early fatigue
- Dizziness/lightheadedness



1. Swick, M. and Paroski, K. in Perspective in Exercise Science and Sports Medicine 1990, pp. 1-38. 2. Casa, D. et al. Journal of Athletic Training 35: 212-214, 2000. ©2008 S-A-C, Inc.

#### FOOTBALL

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