

# STAYING HYDRATED

By Diane Kreiger Spivak  
Special Splash Correspondent

May/June Volume 15 Issue 3 page 12 Charlene Boudreau, director of USA Swimming's Performance Research and Nutrition Programs, offer some tips on staying hydrated while training and competing.

No matter your age or the length of your workout, all swimmers need fluids during practice to stay hydrated, Boudreau says. A couple of sips of water every 15 to 20 minutes should do the trick, but a workout longer than 90 minutes requires an additional fuel source like a sports drink, which provides electrolytes.

Drinks that are too concentrated can inhibit fluid absorption and lead to stomach cramping, Boudreau says. Drinks that are 6 to 8 percent carbohydrate by weight, such as Gatorade and Powerade, are recommended. Boudreau warns swimmers to stay away from energy drinks, such as Red Bull, Sobe, and others.

After a workout, drink at least one cup of water. Competitive swimmers also need slightly more than 1 gram of carbohydrates for every kilogram of body weight each hour after a workout, beginning immediately within the first hour after a workout.

Below are some simple points to remember in staying hydrated:

- During practice, keep a full water bottle by the side of the pool and sip between repeats and sets.
- For workout 90 minutes or longer, choose sports drinks like Gatorade that stimulates fluid absorption, maintain proper fluid balance and provide energy to working muscle. Avoid carbonated drinks, which can cause stomach bloating and may reduce fluid intake.
- Outside of the workout, stay hydrated with water, 100 percent fruit juices and soups. Limit sports drinks to practice only, and limit sodas and coffee to special occasions.
- Check the color of your urine occasionally. Dark-colored urine may be an indication that you are dehydrated and need fluids.
- Don't "over drink" water at meets. It is important to pair water with electrolytes like sodium and potassium to keep the body's fluid balance in check. If the meet is in a hot environment, stay hydrated with a combination of water, sports drink and juice.

