

Hydration for active kids

Kids regulate their body temperature by sweating. Drinking water to replace these lost fluids is essential for children to stay cool and remain hydrated.

The amount of sweat produced by the body increases as the temperature, humidity and intensity of activity increases. The more we sweat, the more fluid we need to replace. Not drinking enough fluid to replace sweat loss can lead to dehydration and impact performance, behaviour and concentration. **TIP: If your active kids aren't asking for toilet breaks, they may not be drinking enough.**

WATER FIRST

Although there are an increasing number of drinks marketed for sports hydration, plain water is the drink of choice. However, when voluntary intake is not meeting fluid requirements, a sports drink can play a role in hydrating active kids. Some contain ingredients that improve water absorption and replace electrolytes lost due to sweating.

Sports drinks



These contain carbohydrates for fuel and sodium to drive the sensation of thirst. They optimise fluid absorption and retention and contain potassium to prevent muscle contraction. In addition to flavor for taste, they may contain other ingredients such as proteins, vitamins, minerals and herbs. A true sports drink contains 6-8% carbohydrate and 230mg-575mg/Litre.

Cordial/soft drink/fruit juice



Higher in carbohydrates and energy (kilojoules), these types of drinks are lower in electrolytes when compared to sports drinks. Carbonated drinks decrease voluntary fluid intake and can cause bloating. The additional energy (kilojoules) can lead to weight gain if it's not required. Water is healthier choice.

Sports water



Sports waters contain lower carbohydrate and electrolyte content than sports drinks. They are a better choice for lower intensity activities or moderate intensity exercise that lasts less than 60mins. These are a good option for those who need flavoured fluids to encourage fluid intake, but not the excess energy (kilojoules) of a sports drink.

Energy drinks



Energy drinks contain carbohydrate levels that are generally too high to add any benefit to performance. They also contain other ingredients such as caffeine, guarana and taurine. It is best for children to avoid these ingredients due to the limited amount of knowledge around safe doses and effects.

Protect the teeth!

Sports drinks, fruit juice and carbonated drinks are all examples of acidic drinks that can erode tooth enamel. **TIP: minimise contact of drink with teeth by encouraging the use of a straw or using squirtable water bottles. Rinse the mouth with plain water after drinking to neutralise the acidity.**

Keep kids hydrated by:

- Offering water breaks throughout the day.
- Keeping water close by and allowing kids to drink when they choose.
- Add mint or ginger to flavour water and make it more appealing.
- Fill water dispensers with ice to keep it cold as the day goes on.
- Ask kids to bring their own water bottles so they can refill them throughout the day.
- Offer foods that are high in water content such as fruit and veg as mid-morning or mid-afternoon snack.