

## July 2004 Health Bulletin

This publication compiled and edited by the H.E.E.L. Program  
(Health Education through Extension Leadership) Staff

Cooperative Extension Service



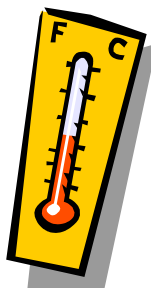
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### Enjoying Exercise During the Summer!

Summer is here and temperatures are rising; but don't let the heat stop you from being active! There are lots of ways to make yourself more comfortable when exercising in the heat. When and where you exercise can make a big difference in the temperatures you experience. What you eat, drink, and wear all affect your body's cooling systems.

The majority of heat-related problems occur during the first few exercise sessions in the heat. The body will adjust to the heat in about 10 to 14 days. For the first few exercise sessions in the heat, you should go slower than usual and have shorter work outs.

It is important to listen to your body and follow its signals when working out in the heat. Slow down or stop exercising if you experience any of the following symptoms:



- ☀ **Dizziness**
- ☀ **Nausea**
- ☀ **Headaches**
- ☀ **Cramps**
- ☀ **Loss of energy**

#### 10 Tips for Being Active During the Summer:

1. Work out in the early morning or late evening when it is not as hot.
2. Drink lots of water.
3. Avoid caffeine and alcohol which cause you to lose water.
4. Look for cool, shady places to work out.
5. Take up swimming, but remember that you sweat while you swim, so continue drinking water!
6. Find an air-conditioned place to work out such as a shopping center, gym, or even your living room.
7. Wear light-weight, light color fabrics when active outside.
8. Be sure to wear sunscreen!
9. Eat lots of fruits and vegetables which contain water, sugars, and salts.
10. Sweating is a very sophisticated system for cooling the body. Learn to accept and even enjoy it.

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# Drink fluids before, during, and after exercise!

## Recommendations for fluid intake when exercising in the heat:

- 🕒 2 to 3 hours before exercise - drink 20 oz. of water or a sports drink.
- 🕒 10 to 20 minutes before exercise - drink 10 oz. of water or a sports drink.
- 🕒 Every 10 to 20 minutes during exercise – drink 10 oz. or more of water or sports drink.
- 🕒 After exercise - drink 20 oz. of water or sports drink for every pound of weight lost during exercise. (You might want to step on the scale before and after your exercise to determine the amount you should drink.)

## What should I drink?

Fluid intake is very important when exercising in the heat. Water is best for workouts less than an hour long. Some people prefer the taste of a flavored sports drink; try diluting sports drinks with water to avoid excess calories and sugars. For workouts over an hour long, or for very intense exercise, sports drinks containing carbohydrates and electrolytes may help sustain activity and maintain hydration.

## How do I know if I am drinking enough?

If you are thirsty, you are already a little dehydrated. You should have to urinate every 2 to 4 hours. Your urine should be pale in color. If it is dark, you are not drinking enough.

## Keeping Active Kids Cool

Kids are less able to cool their bodies than adults. To help protect kids from heat and dehydration, encourage them to drink fluids before, during, and after activities.

- Kids often prefer flavored drinks to water, so try a sports drink. When choosing a sport drink, avoid soft drinks and drinks that are high in sugar, such as fruit juice. Commercial sports drinks diluted with water will reduce calories and make them easier to digest.
- Have kids count their gulps!
  - ✓ Before an activity: 8-16 gulps
  - ✓ During an activity: 8 gulps every 15 – 20 minutes
  - ✓ After an activity: 32-48 gulps
- Signs of dehydration in kids include:
  - Dry lips
  - Flushed cheeks
  - Sunken eyes
  - Bright colored or dark urine
  - Infrequent urination
  - Fatigue

## Active Seniors

Certain health conditions make it harder for seniors to manage their body temperature while exercising in the heat. High blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes can reduce sweating and prevent the body from cooling down. Also, some medications can make it harder to manage body temperature. Ask your physician or pharmacist if any of the medications you take may affect your ability to exercise in the heat.

Thirst in older adults is not as strong as in younger people, so seniors must be especially aware of their fluid intake. Use the fluid intake recommendations for adults listed previously on this page.

### Sources:

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