

FLUID REPLACEMENT TIPS FOR THE FIELD HOCKEY PLAYER

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The summer months bring hot and humid conditions to the playing field. Therefore, drinking fluids before, during, and after field hockey competition is essential for top athletic performance. Unfortunately, athletes tend to underestimate the importance of fluid replacements as a integral part of their sports diet. Because water is found in most body tissues (blood 80%, muscle 75%, bones 20%, and fat cells 0-10%), it plays a vital role in all body processes and functions during training and competition.

What are the functions of water in the body during a field hockey game?

Water carries energy to the working muscles.

Water helps maintain proper body temperature.

Water is found in all body tissues and serves as a “shock absorber” & “lubricator” for organs and joints.

When are the best times to drink fluids?

The day before: you should drink as much fluids as you can tolerate and eat plenty of nutrient-rich carbohydrate foods that have high water content (fruits & vegetables). For every gram of carbohydrate stored in the body, 3 to 4 grams of water are stored that are readily available for essential body processes.

Two to three hours before competition, you should drink 16 to 32oz. of water, sports drink or diluted fruit juices. Since the body takes roughly 1 to 2 hours to process fluids, you will have time to empty their bladder before exercising.

If tolerated, 10 to 15 minutes before training or competition, you should try super-hydrating the body with another 12 to 24oz. of water

During play, you should drink as much as you he can comfortably tolerate (ideally 6 to 8oz. every 15 to 20 minutes).

After practice or competition, you should drink water and nutrient-rich beverages until you are no longer thirsty and then an additional 16 to 20oz. (2-3 cups).

General Fluid Replacement Tips:

Cold beverages empty from the stomach faster than warm or hot beverages.

Calories, salt, acid, and temperature of the fluids are all factors affecting the rate at which fluids are then absorbed into the bloodstream.

The best way to drink a lot of fluids is to carry a 32oz. plastic or metal water bottle with you at all times.

Caffeinated beverages should be used with great caution because they can cause dehydration.

What fluid is best for the athlete? The athlete should consume a beverage that taste great, does not cause stomach discomfort, and enhances absorption and performance; fluid intake is all a matter of personal preference; what works for one athlete may or may not work for another athlete.