

Ready, Set, Drink!

KIDS AND DEHYDRATION

By Shaleek Wilson

12-18 OUNCES OF FLUID RECOMMENDED BEFORE SPORTS ACTIVITY



Dr. Chris G. Koutures
Pediatric and Sports
Medicine Specialist

Dr. Koutures is a member of the American Academy of Pediatrics Executive Committee on Sports Medicine and Fitness. He operates a Pediatric and Sports Medicine practice in Anaheim Hills and also practices at CHOC. Dr. Koutures has held several U.S. Olympic appointments, including working with the U.S. Men's and Women's National Volleyball Teams, and participating in the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics. He's currently the team physician for Cal State Fullerton Athletics.

Dr. Koutures' philosophy of care: "I strongly believe taking time to educate patients and families and communicating with other medical professionals best provides a comprehensive, patient-specific approach to managing injuries and illnesses."

EDUCATION:

University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Medicine

BOARD CERTIFICATION:

General Pediatrics and Sports Medicine

READY FOR ACTION?

When temperatures heat up, the risk of children becoming dehydrated intensifies. "Dehydration occurs when an athlete has less body fluid than they need," says Dr. Koutures. "That can be from not getting enough fluid at the start of practice or excessive sweating or vomiting."

If your child plays sports, there are rules coaches and caregivers can enforce to keep them hydrated, healthy and in tip-top performance shape.

TIME OUT

When dehydration sets in, "you're going to see kids not be as energetic," explains Koutures.

Some tell-tale thirsty signs:

- › Decreased attention
- › Stomach ache complaints
- › Vomiting
- › Dropping to one knee

Time out tip: get child in the shade, make sure they are alert, cool them down with ice packs; have them sip small amounts of fluid, if they can.

15 THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF MINUTES BETWEEN WATER BREAKS DURING PRACTICE

104° TEMPERATURE OF HIGH FEVER AND POSSIBLE REACTION TO DEHYDRATION



HAVE A GAME PLAN

Preventing dehydration is all about preparation. "In the days before a sports practice or activity, make sure kids get plenty of fluids and water-rich fruits and veggies, like watermelon and berries," explains Dr. Koutures.

Coaches should also keep an eye on kids who may be at higher dehydration risk, including those who may have just gotten over a cold or are overweight.

Is H₂O Good Enough?

Some kids simply don't like the taste of water. If your child won't drink it, flavored beverages are acceptable. "My favorite recovery drink is chocolate milk," says Dr. Koutures. "It has carbohydrates, protein, vitamin D and calcium." For kids younger than 5, water is best, but drinks like Pedialyte are good, too.

Keeping Your Athlete in Top Shape

When it comes to sports-related injuries, the experts at the CHOC Children's Orthopaedic Institute know that children aren't just small adults. Special training and experience in pediatric sports medicine allow our specialists to appropriately treat the medical needs unique to children and teens. Our specialists work one-on-one with each patient to develop an individualized diagnosis and treatment plan—with an emphasis on preserving future growth and function, and a safe return to play.

Find out more at www.choc.org/sports

