

We Can't Say It Enough This Time of Year

HYDRATE, HYDRATE, HYDRATE!!

Hydration isn't just about drinking water when you feel thirsty. It's a performance strategy that can make or break your game. For student-athletes, staying hydrated is non-negotiable if you want to fuel your training, maximize performance, and recover like a pro.

Let's walk through a simple, time-based hydration schedule to help you stay on track from sunrise to bedtime. This is your go-to guide to stay sharp, strong, and safe on and off the field.

- **Wake-Up (6–8 AM): 8–16 oz Water**
 - Start your day by rehydrating! You lose fluid overnight through breathing and sweat. Drinking 8–16 oz of water helps jump-start your metabolism, boosts focus, and improves digestion.
 - Pro Tip: Add lemon or a pinch of electrolyte powder for flavor and added minerals.
- **Breakfast: 8 oz Water or Milk**
 - Pair hydration with a balanced meal that includes protein, carbs, and healthy fats. Milk provides hydration plus nutrients like calcium and protein for bone and muscle recovery.
- **Mid-Morning (9–11 AM): 8–12 oz Water**
 - This is a common time for student-athletes to forget to drink! Keep a water bottle on hand and sip steadily, especially during classes. Don't wait until you feel thirsty. That's already a sign you're dehydrated.
- **Lunch (11 AM–1 PM): 8–12 oz Fluid**
 - Drink water, milk, or 100% fruit juice with your meal. Avoid sugary drinks and soda that can spike your blood sugar and worsen dehydration.
- **Afternoon (2–4 PM): 8–16 oz Water or Sports Drink**
 - Afternoon is usually when practices and training start. Make sure you're not walking onto the field already in a fluid deficit. Sports drinks with electrolytes are helpful if training exceeds an hour or takes place in hot/humid conditions.
- **Pre-Practice/Workout (30–60 min Prior): 8–12 oz Water or Electrolyte Drink**

Fuel your body for performance. Sip slowly! Chugging leads to poor absorption and discomfort during activity. Pre-hydration is especially key in warm environments.

- **During Training/Game: 4–8 oz Every 15–20 min**

If you're working hard for more than 60 minutes, you're losing fluids and electrolytes rapidly. Use sports drinks to replenish both. Aim for sodium + carbs in your drink to delay fatigue and prevent cramping.

- **Post-Practice/Workout (Within 30 min): 16–24 oz Per Pound Lost**

- Weigh yourself before and after training to estimate sweat loss. For every pound lost, drink 16–24 oz of fluid with sodium to support fluid retention and rehydration.

- **Dinner: 8–12 oz Water or Milk**

- Dinner is your recovery meal. Prioritize high-quality protein, anti-inflammatory fats, and carbs to replenish glycogen. Fluids here help with digestion and cell repair.

- **Evening (1–2 Hours Before Bed): 4–8 oz Water**

- Top off your tank but don't overdo it, or you'll disrupt your sleep with midnight bathroom trips. Staying hydrated helps muscle recovery and sleep quality.

Dehydration Warning Signs:

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Dark yellow urine
- Poor concentration
- Cramping
- Sluggish performance

How to Monitor Hydration:

Check your urine color! Aim for light yellow, like lemonade. Dark urine? You need more fluid. (See Chart on Next Page)

Did You Know?

- Most athletes need at least 80–100+ oz of fluid daily (more with heat, sweat, or long practices).
- 1–2% loss of body weight from sweat can cause a measurable drop in performance, poor recovery, and increased injury risk.
- Dehydration combined with under-fueling raises risk for burnout, mood swings, and muscle loss.

Final Takeaway:

- Hydration is performance nutrition. Use this daily guide as your personal hydration game plan. Build habits around when and how to drink, not just how much. Your brain, muscles, and future self will thank you.

Examples of Electrolyte Drinks for Athletes:

- Gatorade/Powerade
- Pedialyte
- Bodyarmor
- Liquid IV (Powder)
- Waterboy (Powder)
- DripDrop (Powder)

Are you hydrated?

Urine color chart

1		Congratulations!
2		If your urine matches colors 1, 2, or 3, you are properly hydrated.
3		Continue to consume fluids at the recommended amounts.
4		If your urine is below the RED line, you are DEHYDRATED!
5		You are at risk for cramping, heart attack, anxiety attack, heat illness and more.
6		You need to drink more water now!
7		If your urine is this color, you must drink water immediately or die a slow, painful death.
8		Seek medical attention immediately