

Increasing Appropriate Fluid Intake for Tennis

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ABSTRACT

This article highlights the importance in consuming the correct amount and type of fluid for effective hydration and thermoregulation. Identifies 10 top tips to appropriately hydrate during tennis.

Key Words: Hydration, Thermoregulation, Electrolytes.

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IMPROVING YOUR HYDRATION STATUS

At some point, we have all heard, "Drink lots of water!" As the weather gets warmer and on the tennis court it can get downright sweltering-competitive tennis players encounter a high heat index and hot court surfaces. These conditions make tennis players targets for dehydration and heat illness. Water is good for us, but too much actually dilutes your body's sodium levels low enough to increase other medical problems including muscle cramping. So, what is adequate hydration? Target a 10- 12 cup (3-4 liter) training diet base daily either of water or equivalent hydrating beverages. Which beverages are best, and how do they fit into our overall eating plan? Here are some answers.

BEVERAGES AND FOODS THAT COUNT TOWARD DAILY HYDRATION NEEDS



BEST: water, fitness waters, sport beverages, seltzer, club soda, mineral water, flavored waters (As above with Serena Williams)

Very good: 100% fruit juices, lemonade, tomato and vegetable juices low-fat milk

Good: raw fruits and vegetables

So-so: soft drinks (diet soft drinks in moderation), decaffeinated coffee, yogurt

Not so good: caffeinated beverages and alcohol are diuretics and do not count toward water intake (As below with Janette Husárová)



TOP TEN WAYS TO INCREASE YOUR FLUID INTAKE ON AND OFF THE COURT

1. Drink 8 to 16 ounces water-based beverage (water, juice, milk) with every meal and snack

2. Limit caffeinated beverage intake after a certain time of day (for example, 1 pm) and set a reasonable limit on coffee or soda intake (for instance, 1 to 2 cups per day)

3. Substitute decaffeinated tea, soda, or coffee for some of your caffeinated drinks

4. Increase your vegetable juice and milk consumption (2 cups of vegetable juice = minimum 4 vegetable servings per day; 2 cups milk = minimum dairy intake per day)



5. Try carbonated calorie-free fruit flavored waters to enhance your fluid intake

6. Don't be afraid to drink sport beverages on the court; these help to meet both electrolyte and energy needs on the court

7. Keep a water bottle or jug with you at all times (freeze overnight so it stays cool during the day at practices)

8. Pre-hydrate before you go on the court at least 2-3 cups the hour before; Drink until your urine is a pale yellow color

9. Drink at least ½ cup to 1 cup of fluids every 15-20 minutes on the court; drink at every changeover during matches!

10. For recovery, grab a 24 ounce bottle of water or sport beverage as you leave the court to replenish water, energy, and electrolyte needs. If you are a heavy sweater, getting salt in a beverage or food at this time is highly recommended.