

Hydration

For Players at F3, T1-T4 & E1 Stages of the Gaelic Games Player Pathway

Water plays a vital role in maintaining blood volume, regulating body temperature, and enabling all physiological processes, especially during training and matches. Even a small fluid loss of 2% body weight can impair performance.

Why Hydration Matters?

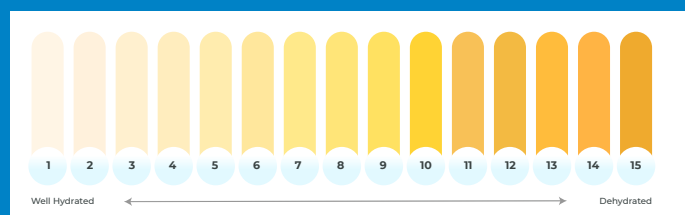
Negative effects of dehydration include:

- Fatigue and early exhaustion
- Reduced concentration and slower reaction times
- Weakened immune function
- Reduced adaptation to training

When To Hydrate?

Your urine should be plentiful and its colour should be in the well hydrated zone. If not, start drinking immediately.

Start each exercise session fully hydrated. Check the colour of your morning urine for a quick indication. If your urine colour is greater than 7 on the above chart, you are probably dehydrated and need to increase your fluid intake immediately. If your urine is often dark, make sure you increase your fluid intake in future. Rehydration is more effective when fluids are drunk over several hours, rather than immediately after exercise all at once.



How Much To Drink?

Fluid requirements will be different for every player. A good starting point is to try and drink 35 mL of water for every kilogram of body weight daily or 5-10 mL/kg in the 2-4 hours prior to an exercise session. Drink to thirst and utilise water breaks during the exercise session. Post-session, 1.5 L of fluid should be consumed for every 1 kg body weight lost via sweat.

What To Drink?

Water is good, but may not always be the best choice. Look for drinks which contain sodium (salt), the major electrolyte, as this helps the body retain the fluid you drink, thereby assisting hydration (this is recommended when training or playing in hot and humid environments). These are often called 'isotonic' sports drinks, and are usually effective for rehydration.

Homemade isotonic sports drink: 200 mL ordinary fruit squash + 800 mL water + a pinch salt

Practical Hydration Tips

- Carry a large water bottle and refill regularly throughout the day.
- Choose fluid options/flavours that you enjoy to increase intake.
- Monitor urine; colour chart, smell, frequency, quantity.

All information is for guidance purposes only. For specific guidance, please contact a suitably qualified professional.

For further information on how to manage hydration and nutrition changes whilst playing sport,

visit the relevant stage of the Gaelic Games Player Pathway:

<https://ladiesgaelic.ie/lgfa-hub/players/player-pathway/> or

<https://camogie.ie/player-information/player-welfare>