



## **Think Hydration! Read for important information on how to stay hydrated for the big race**

The importance of drinking the right amount of water before, during and after a run.

It is very important to make sure the body is fully hydrated on a daily basis, but even more so when exercising. The importance significantly increases in hotter temperatures.

Over the years, at the Sheffield Half Marathon I have seen hundreds of people who have presented at the end of the race with conditions and injuries directly related to dehydration.

Some of these have been so severe that they have needed to be taken to hospital by ambulance directly from the race.

Everyone at Sheffield Half Marathon wants to avoid this.

James Marvin, Head of Service & Development at The Mark Roe Sports Physio Academy, tells us why is water so important to us and what to do in the run up to, during and after the race.

Water is important because it:

- Composes 90% of our brain
- Makes up 75% of our muscles
- Makes up 83% of our blood
- Accounts for 22% of our bones
- Transports nutrients and oxygen to cells and helps the body absorb nutrients
- Moistens oxygen for breathing
- Helps convert food into energy (metabolism)
- Protects and cushions vital organs
- Protects and cushions our joints
- Regulates body temperature

So you can see that if your water levels aren't kept optimal before, during and after the race, you run the risk of not only serious illness and injury, due to extra pressure on your body, but your overall performance will decrease and you will find the run harder.

Before the run (days and hours leading to the start)

Overall the body is around 70% water, which shows why it is such an important part of nutrition. This is especially true when we lose around 1.5 litres of water a day just through metabolism, sweating and breathing (i.e. being alive).

Therefore it is imperative you don't just think about drinking water in the hours before the race (which is of course important) you need to be making sure it is a daily occurrence leading up to the run.

Drinking water steadily throughout the day avoids dehydration. Having too much water in one go can actually lead to dehydration as the body gets overloaded and makes you go to the toilet to get rid of the excess. You end up eliminating too much water when this happens.



If you go too long before each drink of water you run the risk of becoming dehydrated and feeling some of the symptoms highlighted below.

Each day you should aim to take on board at least 2 Litres of water (around 8 glasses) over the course of the day and evening to replace what is naturally lost and keep on top of your hydration levels. Remember this should increase on days you exercise and more so if you exercise in the heat.

#### During the run

Make sure you don't just leave it until after the race to get some water down you. By continuing to drink water during the run you top up fluid stores that are lost in the process of exercise through metabolism and sweating. This will help you prevent dehydration as you run.

It is also easier to recover from a small amount of dehydration after the race if you do this. Take on a little bit of water as often as you can to keep hydration constant.

It is always good practice to top up water levels as you go rather than play catch up later, as you will suffer from the effects of dehydration until balance is restored. The lower the body's water levels, the more severe the effects, and the longer it takes to recover.

The complications of dehydration include:

- Reduced stamina and strength
- Increased thickness of blood meaning the heart has to beat faster at lower workloads creating fatigue and poor performance
- Headaches and muscle cramps
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Loss of concentration
- Increased appetite
- Increased blood pressure
- Increased internal body temperature

Not really productive for a good run!

#### After the run

It is important to continue to drink water to offset dehydration even after the run is over to make sure you keep water levels optimal.

If you weigh yourself before and after training, the difference is actually the amount of water you have lost and not the amount of body fat.

Remember to drink water gradually over a prolonged period of time so to not overload the body but often enough to make a difference.

#### Key point

Keep hydrated before, during and after your run to help keep you in top condition and prevent injuries from mental/physical fatigue and overexertion!

For further details on The Mark Roe Sports Physio Academy and its new additional base at BodyFlo Gym in Hillsborough visit [www.sheffieldtherapycentre.co.uk](http://www.sheffieldtherapycentre.co.uk) or [www.markroesportsphysio.co.uk](http://www.markroesportsphysio.co.uk) or call 0114 2390022 or 07932 669672.