

FLUIDS:

Well, here we are training for a marathon in the onset of summer and all that goes with the heat and humidity. As your runs start to lengthen in preparation for your marathon remember the importance of fluids in maintaining your performance and keeping you from getting dehydrated.

Did you know that a fluid deficit of only 2% can affect your performance?

To maintain your performance keep these simple points in mind:

1. You don't start getting thirsty until you are already 2% dehydrated. Therefore, drink 6-8 oz of water before beginning your training run and start drinking fluids 20 minutes into your training run, even if you aren't thirsty.
2. Take a drink of 4-5 ounces every 20 minutes in your run, a little more if you perspire a lot (like me!).
3. At 60 minutes into your run switch to a carbohydrate containing fluid. This will do two things. First, it will replenish carbohydrate that has been burned up, thus maintaining an important fuel source as your glycogen supplies dwindle on that long run. Second, it will keep you from drinking too much free water and thus risking water intoxication. I personally like 3/4 strength gatorade. Sometimes I will alternate water and my gatorade mix.
4. If you are using Power Gel or Gu, remember to take those with water, not a carbohydrate containing fluid. Thus you will not risk gastric distress from too high a carbohydrate concentration.
5. Weigh yourself naked before and after your longer runs. See how much your weight goes down. That will give you an indication of how you are doing in maintaining fluids.

Remember, if you are thirsty on the run you are already dehydrated.

I found out the importance of doing this right!. On my 14 mile training run for the Marathon of the Palm Beaches I did NOT carry fluids because a friend was going to catch up to me on a bicycle within 60 minutes (I had water available at water fountains for that first 60 minutes). This friend got delayed and did not catch up to me until I had been out for approximately 1 hour 45 minutes. By that time, with no fluid/carbohydrate repletion, I was starting to feel like my legs were cement. After she finally caught up with me and I got the fluid with carbohydrate on board I felt markedly better within 15 minutes or so.