

Hydration on the Run

Hydration during running is not as complicated as you may have been led to believe.

Runners almost never experience dehydration levels sufficient to cause major health consequences. But normal levels of dehydration will make you feel uncomfortable and cause you to slow down.

Drinking while you run will limit these negative effects of dehydration. But what should you drink, how much, and when? In the past, athletes were encouraged to drink as much as possible during exercise, however, it is now understood that this is bad advice.

It is possible to drink too much during exercise. Forcing yourself to swallow more fluid than your body really needs while running may cause gastrointestinal distress, and in extreme cases it can cause a dangerous condition known as water intoxication, or hyponatremia. Also, research has shown that drinking to completely offset sweating offers no advantage with respect to performance or body temperature regulation compared to drinking by thirst.



Olympic medallist & SOS athlete, Nick Willis.
Credit: Rowan Greig

New advice - drink according to your thirst. As long as you keep an adequate supply of drink accessible during your runs, you will naturally drink enough to optimize your performance.

Plain water is adequate, but sports drinks like SOS Hydration offer a couple of advantages. Specifically, you'll be able to replace the sodium and other minerals that your body loses in sweat along with water. In addition, with SOS you'll absorb 3x more water than drinking water alone.

Maintaining access to fluids during runs can be challenging. Wearing a squeeze or a fluid belt can slow you down and you cannot always carry enough fluid in this manner to cover your longest runs. To ensure that you have enough fluid to cover these runs, either plan to return home midway through the run to refill your bottle or do a bottle drop before your runs. And remember, don't force down fluids. Drink when you're thirsty.

For more information and the full story, visit: <https://magazine.sosrehydrate.com/category/sports/running/>

