

# Tips on Proper Hydration

Many people are not used to drinking the amount of fluids that you will need to consume while training and during the Challenge in October. Think of drinking proper amounts of water and electrolyte replacements, as another part of your training. It is a learned skill, one that will make your riding healthy and safe. Fluid loss, as little as 2% (three pounds for a 150-pound person), can lead to a decrease in performance. Six percent can send you to the hospital. Water is approximately 65% of your body and is responsible for keeping you cool.

## Early Signs of Dehydration

- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Flushed skin
- Heat intolerance
- Lightheadedness
- Dark urine with a strong odor

## Severe Signs of Dehydration

- Difficulty swallowing
- Stumbling and clumsiness
- Numb or shriveled skin
- Delirium
- Sunken eyes and dim vision
- Painful urination
- Muscle spasms

## Fluid Facts and Functions

- Body weight is 60 to 70 percent water
- Muscle tissue is 70 to 75 percent water
- Fat is 10 to 15 percent water
- Blood is about 90 percent water
- Water (in saliva and the stomach) helps digest food
- Body fluids help to lubricate the joints and cushion organs
- Blood transports nutrients and oxygen to muscles
- Blood carries carbon dioxide, lactic acid, and other waste products away
- Water helps excrete waste products from your body
- Water transports heat from the muscles to the skin
- Sweat cools the body
- Water helps to moisten and warm cold air before it hits the lungs
- Body fluids help to maintain skin temperature in cold weather

## How do I Stay Hydrated?

- Always carry two bottles on your bike, one with water, one with an electrolyte drink. Many people use hydration packs for quicker and easier access. We find that people who use hydration packs often drink more water.
- Weigh yourself undressed before and after exercise. It should be the same. It is easy to drop 2-4 pounds of water on a hot or hard ride, which can lead to dehydration and fatigue. For every pound of weight you lose following a ride, you should drink one-half liter of water to replace it.
- Watch your urine. It should be almost clear and without smell. If it is changing then you are dehydrating.
- Depending on the temperature, your exertion and your body, you should drink half a large water bottle every

30-45 minutes. That's three to four glasses for every hour that you workout. A good rule of thumb is to take a few gulps every 10 minutes.

- Pre-hydrate as tolerated. Some literature suggests as much as 2 glasses of water for every 20 pounds of body weight. Plan on at least 1-2 glasses before a ride.
- If a ride or workout is over 60-90 minutes then your blood sugar (Glucose) and sometimes your electrolytes (potassium and sodium) diminish.
- You need to be ingesting a carbohydrate/electrolyte replacement drink on your rides and workouts longer than 60-90 minutes. Brands on the market consist of Gatorade, Cytomax and Endurox, just to name a few. Try many different types early in your training. Each of us has different tastes and digests differently. It is important that you find one that works for you as well as one you like the taste of. The more you like it, the more you will drink it.