

Hydration

Hydration before, during and after a run is important for all runners. Every runner's needs are different. Your body weight, sweat rate, and effort level, along with the temperature, humidity, and elevation, affect how much you should drink. Some runners get thirsty quickly; others can go hours without feeling the need to drink much. If you drink when you're thirsty, you'll stay adequately hydrated. However, studies suggest drinking on runs 90 minutes or longer.



Sports Drinks vs. Water

Should you choose sports drinks or water? On runs longer than 60 minutes, sports drinks are a good idea. They have valuable carbs that your muscles need for energy. Sports drinks also contain electrolytes like sodium and potassium, which are lost through sweat but are integral to nerve and muscle function, and contribute to your body's water balance.

Postrun Hydration

When you come in from a run, drink until you're satisfied. If your face has white salt streaks on it postrun, it means you've lost quite a bit of sodium, so it's best to have a sports drink, water with an electrolyte-tablet in it, or water along with food that contains sodium.

After especially long or hard runs, you also need protein to help your muscles heal. That's why recovery drinks are ideal—they provide protein and fluid to help you rehydrate. Chocolate milk is also a great choice because the carbs-to-protein ratio is perfect for recovery.

If you're working out again within 12 hours—say you ran at night and you're planning to run again in the morning—try to be more diligent about rehydrating. Sip liquids regularly until your urine is back to straw yellow and your weight returns to normal.