

## B. YE OLDE WATERING HOLE: Achieving Adequate Hydration

Water is the most important nutrient. If the body becomes dehydrated, the metabolic processes slow down and don't work as well. When you are dehydrated, an exercise or practice will "feel" difficult.

Wrestlers sometime confuse this feeling with having a "good" work-out. This is just the opposite of what really happens! Dehydrated body cells don't allow you to put forth your maximum effort. In fact, a 1% to 2% loss of body weight due to fluid loss can cause a 15% to 20% decrease in performance!

Signs of dehydration include rapid heart rate, weakness, excessive fatigue, and dizziness. **Dehydration can be dangerous.** Exercising or practicing in a dehydrated condition can lead to heat stroke, muscle breakdown, kidney failure, and even death.

### Here are some points to remember about hydration:

If you drink adequate amounts of water or other fluids, you will feel better and perform better.	Fluids should be ingested 2 hours before (20 oz) and during (8 oz every 15 to 20 minutes) practice for optimal performance.
Thirst is a late sign of dehydration. Your performance could decrease as much as 10% before you feel thirsty. Start drinking fluids even before you get thirsty.	Continue to ingest fluids after practice to rehydrate. Weigh yourself before and after practice; any decrease in body weight is due to a loss in water from the body. Drink 2 cups of fluid for every pound of body weight lost.
One easy way to monitor your hydration status is to check the color of your urine. Light yellow indicates good hydration, dark yellow indicates dehydration.	Avoid alcohol and caffeinated beverages because they will promote dehydration. Carbonated beverages will also decrease the amount of fluid you are able to consume.
Avoid soft drinks because the added sugar in the drinks will slow down absorption.	Cold drinks are absorbed faster and also serve to cool the body to promote optimal performance.
Avoid fruit juices in large amounts at one time because they can cause diarrhea. However, 100% fruit juices are a healthy drink and should be consumed as part of your fluid intake throughout the day.	Water is an appropriate fluid for hydration and rehydration. A sports drink is fine, and the small amount of carbohydrate in a sports drink can provide you with quick energy during long practices or competitions.