

# HOW TO AVOID DEHYDRATION

## 1 Get out of the sun.

Dehydration (actually, volume or fluid depletion) can be caused by excessive perspiration from strenuous activity in hot conditions. Rest frequently in a cool area out of the heat of the sun.

## 2 Drink water and eat salty foods.

Alternate drinking plain water and consuming salty crackers, pretzels, or water that contains sodium, potassium, and bicarbonate. Water alone will not replace lost electrolytes and should not be taken in excess if thirst is due to exertion or sweating.

## 3 Make an oral rehydration drink.

If salty snacks are not available to take with plain water, you can make an oral rehydration drink that is superior to any of the available sports drinks. In a quart of water, add one quarter-teaspoon of table salt, one quarter-teaspoon of baking soda, and two table-spoons of sugar. If baking soda is not available, use another quarter-teaspoon of salt instead. If available, add half a cup of citrus juice, coconut water, or a mashed ripe banana. (These contain recommended potassium.) Drink this until your thirst is quenched.

## 4 Eat sweet snacks high in carbohydrates.

Cookies and other sweet bread products will increase energy. Consume sweet drinks such as orange juice if no snacks are available.

## 5 Avoid alcohol.

Alcohol may worsen symptoms of volume depletion and should be avoided during excessive sweating.

### Be Aware

- Some people will not realize they are fluid depleted until they are nearly unconscious. Drink balanced fluids regularly in hot weather and pay attention to thirst, headaches, dizziness, loss of appetite, darker urine, and fatigue, all signs of volume depletion.
- Severe volume depletion, which can include lethargy or loss of consciousness, may require treatment with specialized sodium-potassium-glucose drinks (oral rehydration therapy) or intravenous fluids.