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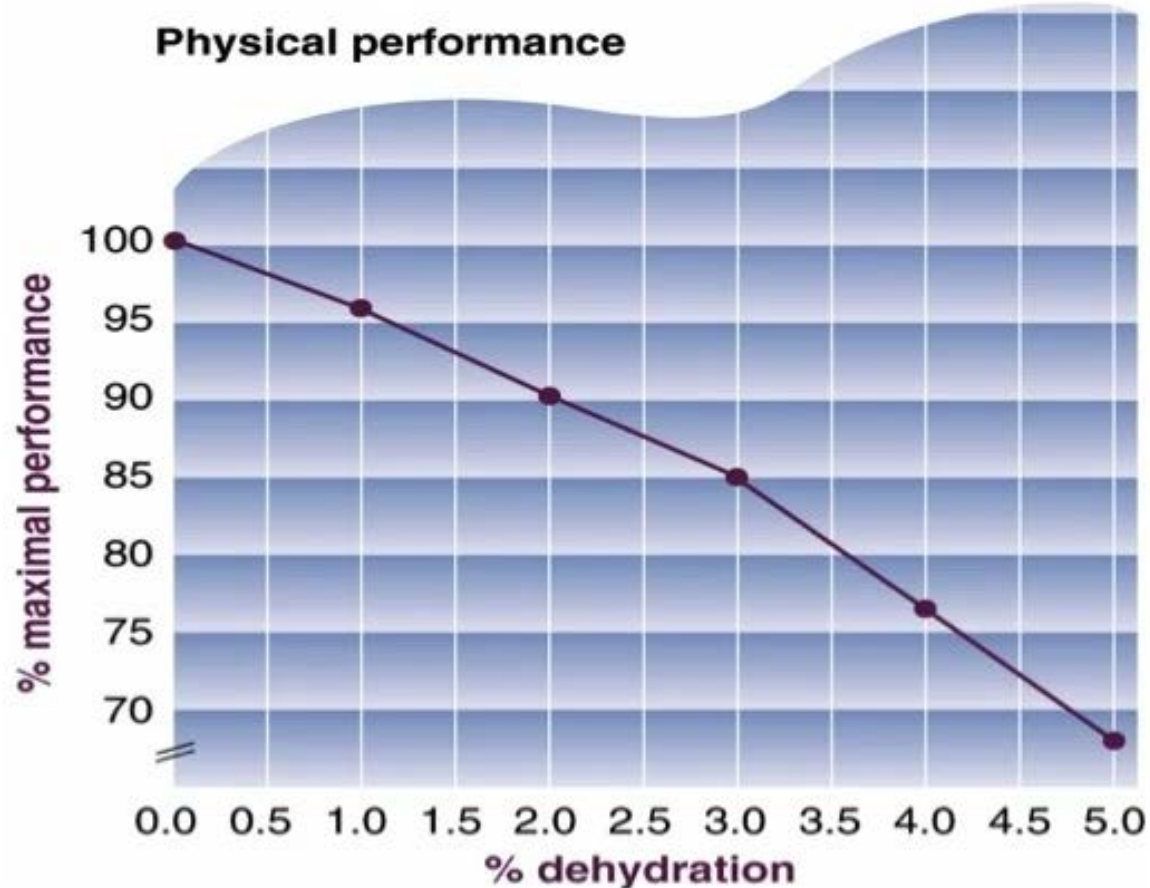
# HOW TO STAY **HYDRATED** AT THE TOKYO PARALYMPIC GAMES?

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**INTERNATIONAL PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE**

# DEHYDRATION IMPAIRS PERFORMANCE - FACT 2

## Effects of Dehydration



Dehydration can reduce:

- Aerobic performance
- Strength
- Power
- Concentration
- Decision making

By the time you are thirsty,  
you are already dehydrated  
by ~ 2% of body weight



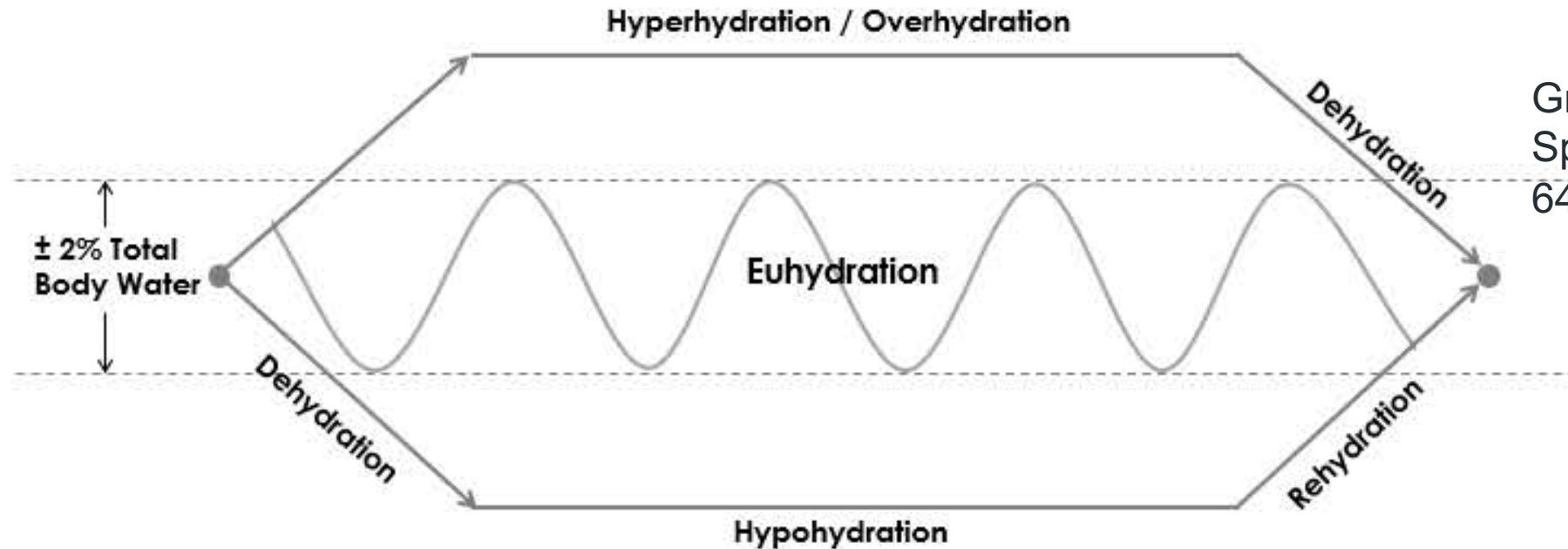
# PREPARING YOUR HYDRATION STRATEGY FOR THE HEAT AT TOKYO 2020

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1. The Para athlete will encounter a unique challenge in Tokyo that will **impact their thermoregulation and hydration**
2. As you acclimatise to the Tokyo heat, **your sweat rate will increase** to control your temperature – but you also need to replace it – extra fluid needed
3. Simple measures exist to allow **athletes to measure their own hydration status**
4. All athletes should have a **practiced individual hydration strategy** in place prior to Tokyo



# HYDRATION TERMINOLOGY



Greenleaf, Med Sci Sports Exercise 1992 (6), 645-656.

**Euhydration** – “normal” body water content within body’s homeostatic range

**Dehydration** – the process of dynamic loss of body water – e.g., the transition from euhydration to hypohydration

**Hypohydration** – state of body water deficit

**Rehydration** – the process of a dynamic gain of body water (via fluid intake) – e.g., the transition from hypohydration to euhydration

**Over- or Hyperhydration** – state of body water excess



# WHY SHOULD I STAY HYDRATED?

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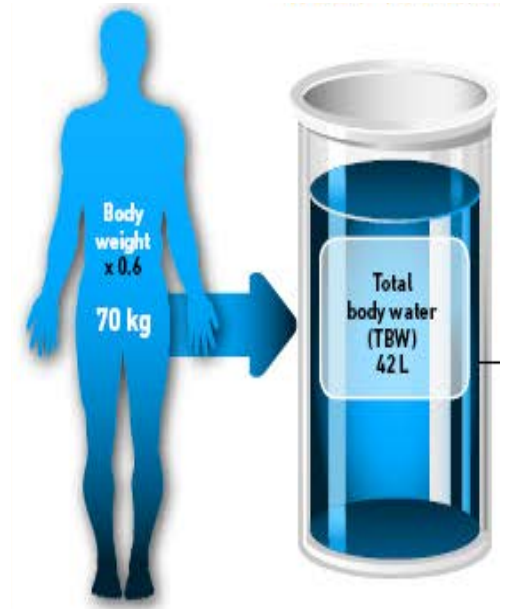
1. Water makes up 50-70% of body mass

2. Drinking fluids can cool you down and help reduce a heat-related illness

3. For some Para athletes, different cooling methods may be needed due to reduced sweating and impaired thermoregulation

4. Dehydration can lead to athletes making poor decisions in competition – not just physical effects

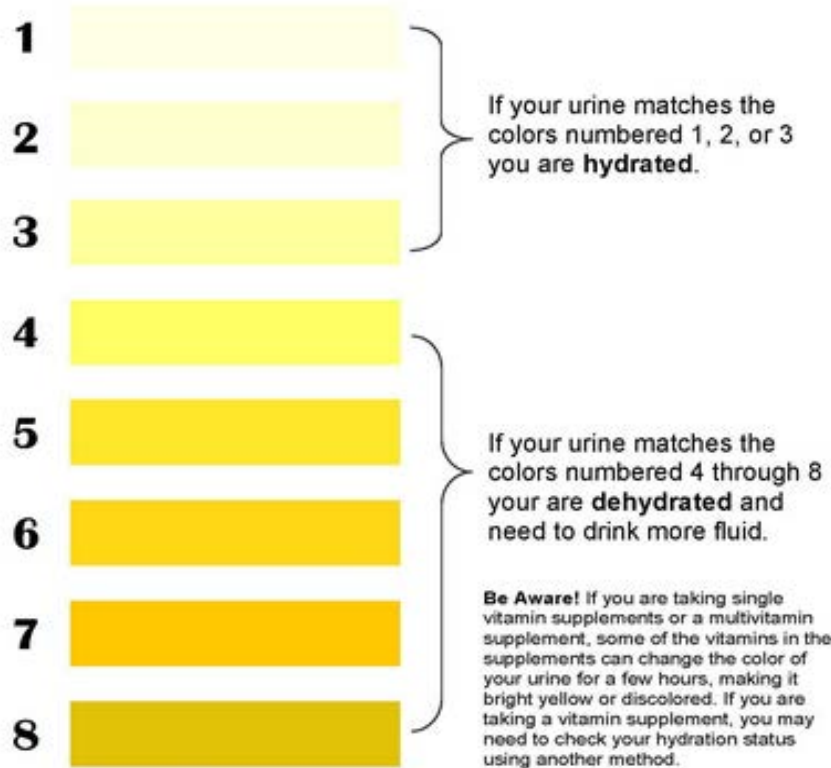
5. Being dehydrated can impair performance in some sports



# HOW CAN I CHECK IF I AM HYDRATED?

## Am I Hydrated? Urine Color Chart

This urine color chart is a simple tool you can use to assess if you are drinking enough fluids throughout the day to stay hydrated.



**Your Nose Knows!**  
While some foods, like asparagus, can cause your urine to smell different, a strong smelling odor can also be a sign of dehydration.



Urine  
Frequency or  
Volume

- Athletes can monitor: urine colour/frequency/volume, thirst sensation
- Sport scientists might measure your urine osmolality or specific gravity



You can also weigh yourself first thing in the morning to check if you are dehydrated based on your 'typical' weight

Use two or more indicators of hydration status



# ARE YOU DEHYDRATED?

Is my body mass >1% lower than normal

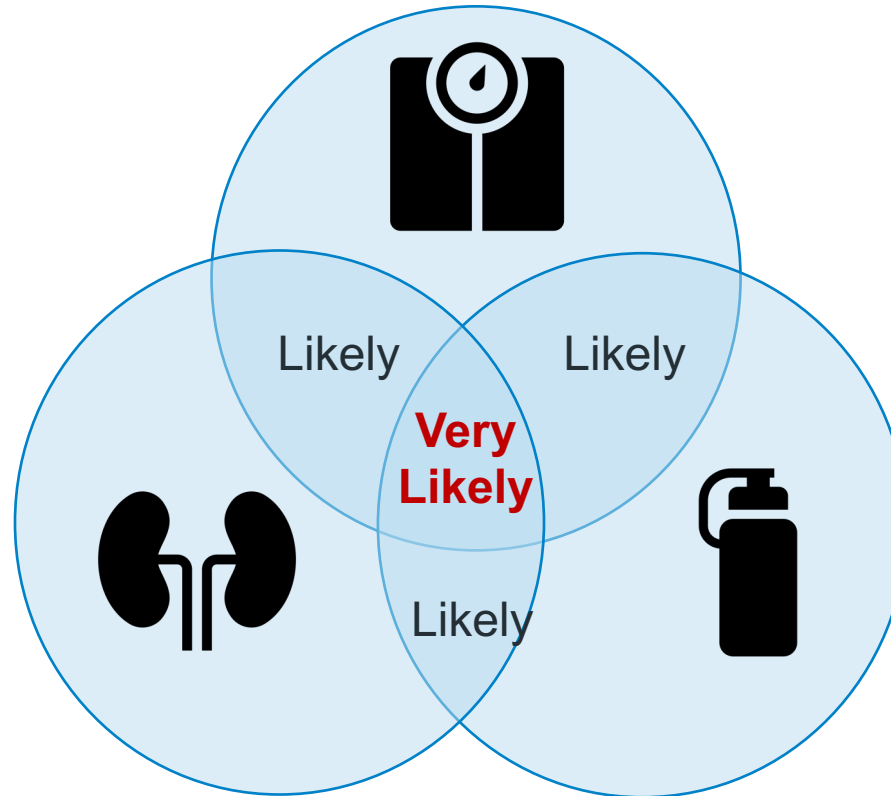
Yes / No

Is my urine dark yellow?

Yes / No

Am I Thirsty?

Yes / No



Assess first thing in the morning (before breakfast)



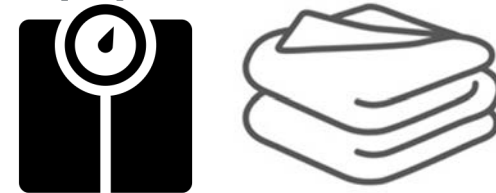
# CALCULATING YOUR OWN HYDRATION STATUS

**Hydration status = % change in nude body mass**  
**Calculation:**  $[(\Delta \text{ body mass}) / \text{baseline body mass}] * 100$

**Example:** Athlete X's body mass decreased from 65.3 kg to 63.8, so a  $\Delta$  body mass = - 2.2 kg

**Hydration Status**  
=  $[(\Delta \text{ body mass}) / \text{baseline body mass}] * 100$   
=  $(-1.5 / 65.3) * 100$   
= **-2.3% change in body mass**

## Equipment Needed



**Body weight scales to 0.10 kg or better and towel**





# CAN I WORK OUT MY SWEAT RATE DURING EXERCISE TO KNOW MUCH FLUID TO TAKE ON AFTERWARDS?



Weight before exercise  
(minimum clothes)

Duration of exercise  
(in hours)

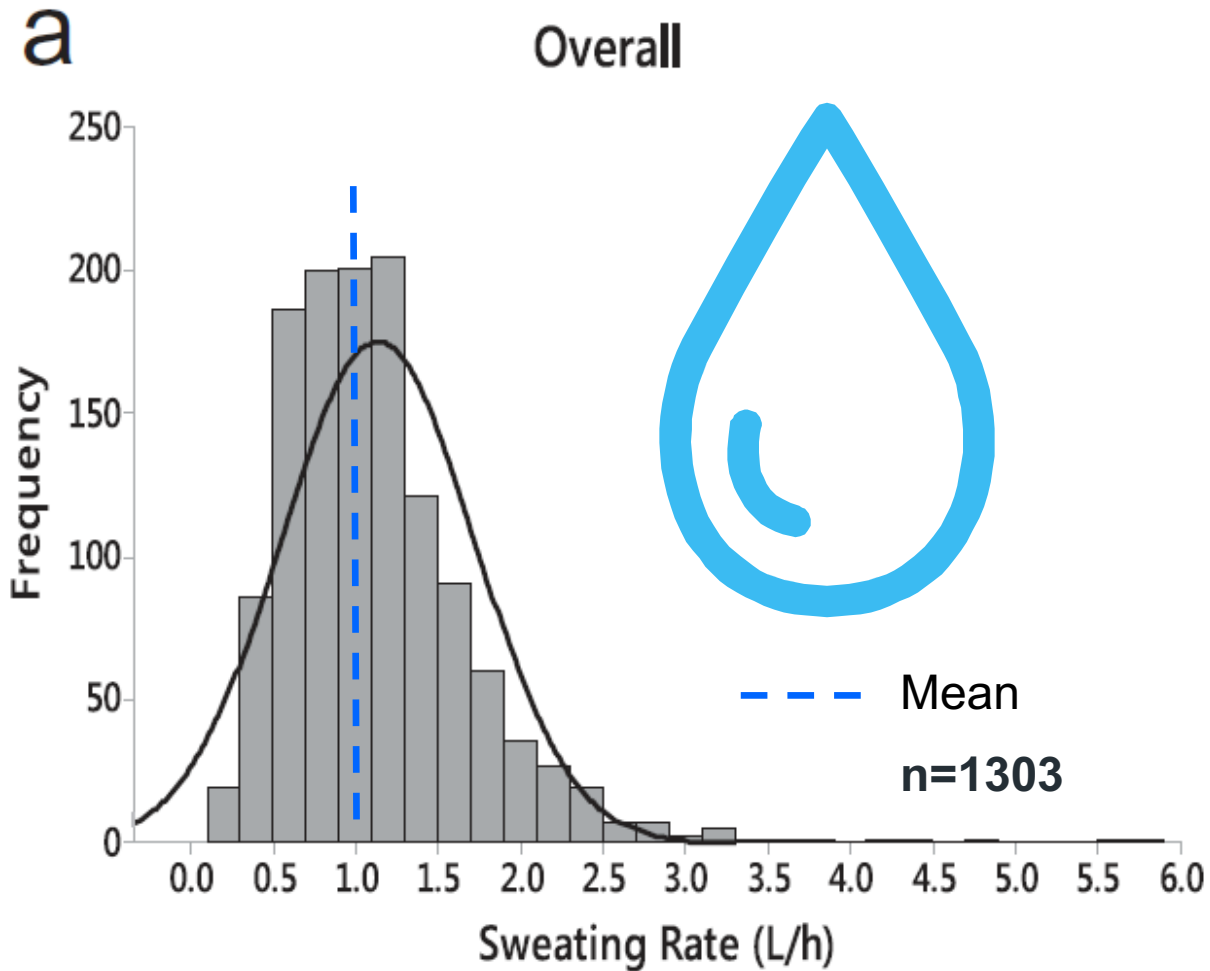
Weight after exercise  
(towel dry)

Acute body mass change to estimate hydration status is appropriate for most individual and team sports < 3 h of exercise

$$\text{Sweat rate (Litres per hour)} = \frac{\text{Weight before exercise} - \text{Weight after exercise}}{\text{Duration of exercise (in hours)}}$$



# WHAT IS A NORMAL SWEAT RATE?



Athlete, Environment, and Exercise Information	Mean $\pm$ SD (Range)
Age (years)	24 $\pm$ 9 (9-70)
Body Mass (kg)	84 $\pm$ 24 (23-178)
Air Temp ( $^{\circ}$ C)	26 $\pm$ 5 (11-50)
Relative Humidity (%)	55 $\pm$ 17 (13-95)
Exercise Duration (h)	1.7 $\pm$ 0.7 (0.5-5.4)

**Para-athletes can determine their own sweat rate when competing in the heat to help develop an individualized fluid strategy.**

**Some para-athletes (amputees, spinal cord injured, with multiple sclerosis) will not perceive heat as much to drink and/or sweat as much as able-bodied athletes.**



# HOW TO CALCULATE FLUID TO DRINK FROM WEIGHT LOSS?

$$\text{Weight before} - \text{Weight after} = \text{Weight lost}$$

$$\text{Weight lost} \times \text{Weight before} = \text{Amount to drink}$$

Rehydration required based on weight lost

WEIGHT LOST	AMOUNT TO DRINK
0.2 kg	300 ml
0.5 kg	750 ml
1.0 kg	1.5 L
1.5 kg	2.25 L
2.0 kg	3 L



It is easy to work out how much you need to drink after exercise, you just need to weigh yourself before and after your activity. It is recommended that you drink 1.5 times the amount of sweat that is lost, assuming that 1kg equals 1L of water

OR

use the table to find the amount you need to drink



# SHOULD I PLAN DRINKING OR DRINK TO THIRST?

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## Drink to Thirst

Short duration activities < 60 to 90 min  
Cooler conditions  
Lower intensity



## Planned Drinking

Longer duration activities > 90 min  
Particularly in the heat  
High intensity  
High sweat rates  
When performance is a concern  
When carbohydrate intake of 1 g/min

**Some athletes with a spinal cord injury may deliberately reduce fluid intake to avoid repeated visits to the bathroom, but this increase dehydration, resulting in fatigue, reduced performance and likelihood of urinary tract infections**



# WHAT ARE MY FLUID NEEDS BEFORE AND AFTER EXERCISE?

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## Guiding principles for para-athletes

- Individualized hydration plan based on the athlete's expected sweat rates
- Opportunity to consume fluids during their event?
- Gastrointestinal tolerance of fluids
- Access to fluids
- Ease of access to bathroom during exercise

**For para-athletes with high sweat rates, or who consistently show > 2% dehydration during exercise, drinking fluid prior to exercise and drinking regularly during the session is likely to be more effective than waiting until you are thirsty**



Training sessions can be useful for trialling timing, volume and type of drink the para-athlete needs



# DO I NEED SODIUM (SALT) IN MY DRINK?

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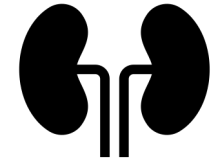
Sodium **stimulates thirst** – which leads to increased fluid intake



Sodium helps **maintain proper fluid and electrolyte balance** in the body



Sodium supports **how well your heart functions** during exercise through better maintenance of blood volume



Sodium stimulates your kidneys towards **better fluid retention**

**Consume sodium with fluids if exercise is >2 h, in hot weather and/or if sweat electrolyte losses are known to be very high**



# WHAT FOODS CAN HELP ME STAY HYDRATED? 15

## — Cooling Foods for Hot Weather! —



Cucumbers



Asparagus



Plums



Broccoli



Celery



Cauliflower



Strawberries



Potatoes



Lettuce



Turmeric



Okra



Grapes



Watermelon



Avocados



Green Beans



Cherries



Pineapple



Zucchini

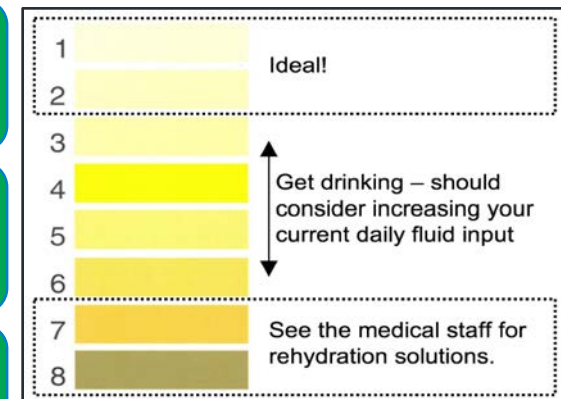
**Remember to always drink with your meals as the electrolytes will assist with fluid retention**

Consuming a small salted snack [e.g. pretzels and/or fluids containing sodium (20–50 mmol/l or 460–1150 mg/l) or glycerol (1.2–1.4 g/kg fat-free mass (FFM) with ~ 25 ml/kg FFM fluid)] before exercise may help stimulate thirst and retention of fluids



# WHAT ARE 7 GOLDEN RULES OF GOOD HYDRATION PRACTICE FOR ATHLETES?

1. Athletes should **carry fluid with them at all times** - with your own water bottle being distinguishable from other athletes
2. **Ice slurries** can reduce sweat rate and slow heat loss but can be effective in humid conditions like Tokyo
3. **Too much fluid too quickly** can cause gut discomfort or a need for frequent visits to the toilet. Keep a steady pace of drinking that you have practiced.
4. **Hand Cooling**, while effective at reducing heat, can reduce function and grip, or be difficult for glove wearers. Focus on cooling non-active body parts.
5. Sports drinks have energy in them and **too much carbohydrate can influence the body's ability to maintain thermal balance** in hot environments
6. Water alone is not ideal for hydrating – so **some carbohydrate and electrolytes in fluid helps** the uptake of the fluid and replenishment of energy stores
7. **Know your hydration plan** based on your sport, level of impairment and sweat rate – **then practice it** alongside cooling strategies.





# RESOURCES THAT SUPPORTED THIS PRESENTATION

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Cheung, S.S. and Ainslie, P.N. (2022). Hydration strategies for exercise (Chpt 4), In [Advanced Environmental Exercise Physiology](#) (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), Human Kinetics, Champaign, IL.

Kenefick, R.W. (2018). [Fluid intake strategies for optimal hydration and performance: planned drinking vs. drinking to thirst.](#) *Sport Science Exchange*, 29 (182), 1-6.

Griggs, K.E., Stephenson, B.T., Prince, M.J. and Goosey-Tolfrey, V.L. (2020). [Heat-related issues and practical applications for Paralympic athletes at Tokyo 2020](#), *Temperature*, 7, Special Issue 1 of 2.

Prichett, K., Broad, E., Scarmella, J. and Baumann, S. (2020). [Hydration and cooling strategies for Paralympic athletes](#), *Current Nutrition Reports*, 9(3), 137-146.



**THANK YOU**

