

# Walk **NEBRASKA**

## **Drink to Your Health!**

When you are thirsty, drink! After and during exercise a person needs liquids to rehydrate their body. Dehydration can cause moodiness, poor cognition and impaired muscle performance. Hydration is important for proper body functioning, temperature regulation and kidney functioning.

Although trends indicate an increase in soft drink consumption, water is still the recommended beverage for hydrating the body. Water comprises 92% of one's blood and 75% of muscles. Based on research, the American Council on Exercise suggests drinking 2 cups of water about 2 hours before exercise and an additional 6-8 ounces every 20 minutes during exercise, or replacing the amount of water lost to sweat. That would be drinking 16 ounces of water for every pound lost during exercise. Sports drinks are recommended for endurance athletes because they replace sodium and other minerals; however, sports drinks contain almost as many calories as soft drinks.

Any beverage can rehydrate the body. One just needs to consider the amount of calories and caffeine in their preferred beverage. Americans now receive over 21% of their daily calories from beverages, indicating that caloric beverages are contributing to the increase in obesity. Some of the latest research indicates that diet sodas contribute to the desire for sweetened beverages. Non-calorie beverages include water, non-caloric soft drinks, unsweetened tea and coffee. The Healthy Beverage Guidelines recommend daily consumption of **20-50 ounces of water**.

Healthy Beverages Guidelines for *optional* beverage consumption are: 0-32 ounces of coffee or 0-40 ounces of tea, 0-16 ounces of low-fat milk, 0-32 ounces non-caloric beverages, 0-8 ounces fruit juice or 0-16 ounces sports drinks, and no more than 8 ounces of calorically sweetened beverage without nutrients (The usual soda has 2 ½ times this amount).

When walking for your health remember to choose low-calorie beverages and drink when you are thirsty. Drink to your health!

### Sources:

Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter, July 2008, Volume 26, Number 5, pp.4-5.

[www.beverageguidancepanel.org](http://www.beverageguidancepanel.org)

<http://www.acefitness.org>

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