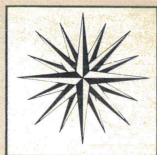


Beyond Sports



Water Just in Case



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Water Just in Case

Drinking a Little and Often

Great quantities of energy are consumed during strenuous physical exercise. Only 20 per cent of this energy is actually used productively; the remaining 80 per cent is simply wasted as heat. A large proportion of the heat generated during physical exercise is lost in perspiration and this causes the body to lose water in appreciable quantities.

A Norwegian physiologist, Dr. Lars Hermansen, has shown that water loss has important consequences for the athlete. A long-distance runner, for example, loses between $3\frac{1}{4}$ and 5 pints of water per hour if the surrounding temperature is 68°F . A loss of 2 or 3 pints reduces his capacity for 'work' by 20 per cent. During a single stage of the Tour de France, a rider can lose up to 9 lb in weight. Certain stages become a race against thirst, a race to see who can reach the next feeding station first. Maybe drinking little and

often—drinking when the need is not pressing—is the secret of success.

Sweating means the lost of salt as well as water, but the effects of salt loss are less important. Nevertheless, over a long period of physical exertion it is sometimes advisable to take a salt tablet, as long as water is drunk with it. Salt taken without water can cause stomach troubles without having any favorable effect on tendency to lose heat. Competitors in long-distance cycle races carry a water-bottle on their bikes. In other endurance sports, feeding stations are authorized along routes, every 5 km in the case of the marathon. Many international tennis players drink both before and during matches, on average about 2 pints of water every $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Skiers drink about the same amount during a 50-km race. A few seconds lost en route may be precious seconds gained over thirstier rivals at the finishing line.