

NUTRITION TIPS & TRICKS

BALANCING ELECTROLYTES

If you've ever felt tired, dizzy, or nauseated while exercising, you've likely heard the tip to drink beverages high in electrolytes – like Gatorade – to perk you up. Why is that? These drinks help replenish the electrolytes you lose through exertion. Electrolytes are positively or negatively-charged ions (sodium, potassium, magnesium, calcium when dissociated from larger molecules) that aid in muscle contractions and transmission of nerve impulses. You need to replenish electrolytes to maintain bodily functions and to prevent cramping and muscle damage.

What do Electrolytes do?

- ✓ Support nerve function
- ✓ Help with muscle contractions
- ✓ Control body temperature
- ✓ Control fluid levels
- ✓ Help maintain pH balance
- ✓ Control respiratory rate
- ✓ Control bladder function
- ✓ Aid in kidney function
- ✓ Maintain normal blood pressure levels
- ✓ Support communication between the senses, muscles, and brain



Electrolytes and Exercising

Your body loses electrolytes through sweat. The more intense the workout, the more electrolytes you lose. An imbalance of electrolytes could cause muscle cramps, muscle weakness, fatigue, and nausea. Remember, never exercise when you're dehydrated. You also sweat when it's hot outside, so make sure you're keeping yourself hydrated with electrolyte-replenishing drinks.

How to Replenish Electrolytes

- Sip on an electrolyte drink. The optimal drink should provide 3-10% carbohydrates and 120-170 mg of sodium per 250 mL
- Enjoy the right foods. Like these! →
- Replenish electrolytes when you're sick. You lose a considerable amount of electrolytes when you're ill, particularly when you have the stomach flu, or if you experience diarrhea and vomiting.



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Make Your Own Electrolyte-Replenisher!

Do you grab a Gatorade when you need an electrolyte boost? There are homemade alternatives that will do the same job and are healthier for you. It's easy to make your own!



The Lip Twister: Tart and Sweet

Ingredients

1 litre water
1/4 cup lemon juice
1/4 cup lime juice
1 tsp sea salt or Himalayan salt
Juice of 1 orange or 1 cup 100% not-from-concentrate juice

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a large pitcher and stir.
2. Serve cold over ice.



Fast and Dirty: Bare Bones Approach

Ingredients

1 lemon
1 orange
4 shakes of salt – Use sea salt or Himalayan salt (NOT table salt)
Squirt of honey
Cold water

Directions

1. Cut lemon and orange in half. Squeeze the juice of each half into a glass.
2. Add salt and honey. Fill the glass with cold water. Enjoy!



Coconut and Lime Sports Drink

Ingredients

3 cups coconut water
1 cup water
1/2 cup lime or lemon juice
2 tbsp maple syrup
1/4 tsp sea salt

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients into a bottle and stir.
2. Sip during your workout or enjoy afterward as needed.

Sources: Dolan, S.H. (2013). Electrolytes: Understanding replacement options. www.acefitness.org/certifiednewsarticle/715/electrolytes-understanding-replacement-options/
Food and Fitness. (2012). What are electrolytes and do we need to replace them after exercise? www.foodandfitness.co.uk/electrolytes-replenish-post-exercise/

