



THEME FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST
HYDRATION

from

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***Thanks to Admin Ski Racing for
sponsoring this month's theme!***

I learn something new every time I read the VARA Theme for the Month, I had no idea sleep was affected by hydration levels! Having been a ski racer and training all the time at altitude in the summer and the fall on glaciers around the world, spending hours on planes, I realized very quickly the importance of drinking enough water. It is a factor in your performance and whether or not you will be at your best or subpar and struggling to keep up! The Knowledge gained from learning about hydration can be life changing. So, Bottoms Up!

Julie Woodworth - VARA Executive Director

HYDRATION, SLEEP and ALTITUDE



The topic for the month of August was going to be "Life Lessons Learned through Youth Sports", however with the record-breaking temperatures and incredible heat waves, "Hydration and Sleep" seemed more pressing and "Life Lessons" will have to wait a month!

With a busy day of sports events, the relentless heat and not enough time in the day to do everything, it can be easy to forget to hydrate until you are so thirsty you feel as if there isn't enough water available to quench your thirst. Most of you probably know that you need to drink water before you feel thirsty. Maybe something you didn't know is that poor hydration can play a role in a "good night's sleep". When you are not well rested it is very hard to play at your best.

Do you often wake up in the morning feeling sluggish, instead of feeling rested and refreshed? It could be due to many things, late-night technology use, stress or the next-door neighbor's dog who won't stop barking. But did you know that not drinking enough water, and not drinking it at the right time throughout the day, could actually be contributing to a "bad night's sleep"?

Going to bed even mildly dehydrated can disrupt your sleep. Below is a hydration schedule that you can follow to ensure you're drinking enough water throughout the day so that you can get a "good night's sleep" and perform at your best.

1st Wake-and-hydrate

2nd If possible, wait two to three hours after you wake up to drink caffeine-Caffeine is a slight diuretic so it will work against you in the hydration department. If you work out in the morning, drink water instead of caffeine. Save the caffeine for after your workout.

3rd Make sure you're drinking water with all of your meals-Water helps your body with digestion.

4th Eat plenty of foods with a high-water content-Eat veggies and fruits that have a high H₂O content like watermelon, strawberries, cucumbers, celery, oranges, spinach, and cantaloupe. They are highly nutritious, a good daily dose of vitamins along with good hydration.

5th Avoid drinking caffeine for a period of 6 hours before going to bed

6th Drink one glass of water right before bed- Drinking a small glass will not cause you to use the bathroom all night. Hydrating before going to bed will actually help you avoid waking up due to thirst.

Now that you have a good hydration schedule lets talk about **hydrating at altitude**. In the next few months many of you will be spending time at altitude (Mt. Hood, Europe, South America, Colorado etc.). It is important to follow your hydration schedule but you will need to alter it a little to take the altitude in to account.

We just learned how water can play a role in sleep, but what else does water do for us?

Water:

- **Eliminates waste through urination, perspiration, and bowel movements**
- **Keeps body temperature in check**
- **Lubricates and cushions joints**
- **Protects sensitive tissues**

Typically, a male needs 15.5 cups of water a day and a female 11.5 cups per day. As a rule of thumb double that when you are at altitude. Here are a few tips to remember when training or competing at altitude.

- **Drink plenty of WATER on your way to altitude.** Water, not soda or any other fluid. In fact, start a few days before you travel. While you are sitting at the airport, on the plane or riding in the car, drink water. You do not want to arrive already dehydrated.
- **Ease into your activity.** It is not wise or realistic to demand the same level of energy from your body at altitude that you experience at sea level. Allow your body time to acclimate and take more rest (and longer rest periods) than you are used to.
- **Carry water wherever you go and drink often.** Your water bottle is your best friend, do NOT go anywhere without it. Pay attention to your body's signals and perhaps drink a little more than you think you need. Never ignore your thirst. You should be producing about 6 1/3rd cups of colorless or lightly colored urine per day.
- **Consume foods with high water content.** If you feel like you cannot drink enough water, focus on consuming water lush fruits and non-starchy vegetables.

- **Avoid excessive amounts of caffeine (Red Bull, Monster Drinks etc.).** Caffeine is a diuretic and may inhibit your body's water absorption. Try to limit liquid intake to mostly plain water

The opposite of **HYDRATION** is **DEHYDRATION**. Dehydration is a serious condition where the body is short of the required amount of water to function normally. If you have any of the below symptoms you must contact your doctor immediately.

- Increased thirst
- Dry mouth and swollen tongue
- Weakness
- Light-headed and dizzy feeling
- Heart palpitations (feeling that the heart is jumping or pounding)
- Confusion
- Sluggishness
- Lack of sweating
- Fainting
- Decreased or dark (deep yellow/amber) urine output

Water has many, many functions in our body and helps us sleep better and perform better. Water is our best friend! Don't go anywhere without it. Stay hydrated, have FUN and

FILL UP THOSE WATER BOTTLES!!!



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