

Hydration

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Hydration Basics

Dehydration is a common cause for fatigue while bicycling long distances.

If you wait until you are thirsty to drink, it's too late, you are already dehydrated.

Cyclists riding long distances and pedaling hard can lose up to 2 liters of fluid per hour.

You know you are properly hydrated when you urinate every 2 to 4 hours throughout the day. The urine should be pale in color and be a decent quantity.

A good recommendation is to drink on a schedule. Drink 4 gulps (about 4 ounces) every 15 minutes. When you are done with your ride, drink enough to quench thirst plus more.

Sports drinks, such as Gatorade, are not recommended for rides less than 90 minutes. Plain water is fine.

Sports drinks are recommended for rides lasting 90 minutes or longer, pedaling at a moderate to hard pace (10-20 miles per hour). In other words, the longer the ride and the harder you pedal, the more you will sweat. Electrolytes are lost in sweat. Sodium is the electrolyte most depleted in sweat. Potassium is the second electrolyte lost in sweat. You can also eat food containing sodium.

On long rides, know where you can refill your water bottles.