

Sports Drinks

Isotonic Drinks

What do they do?

They are designed to quickly replace the fluids which are lost by sweating. They also provide a boost of carbohydrate.

Who drinks them?

Isotonic fluids are the most common drinks for athletes. They are particularly popular for middle and long distance runners.

How does my body deal with them?

The body prefers to use glucose as its source of energy. Sometimes it is better to consume isotonic drinks where the carbohydrate source is a concentrated form of glucose.

Isotonic sports drinks - Lucozade Sport etc. - provide fluid, energy and electrolyte replenishment. These components are depleted during exercise due primarily to an increased perspiration level - we literally sweat these elements out. Of course fluid (water) replacement is important - if water isn't replaced in our exercising system we rapidly dehydrate and in extreme cases exercise must cease completely. In more normal cases exercise performance dips far below an optimal level. Electrolytes are essentially salts lost in sweat. Replacing them will aid the digestion and osmosis of fluid absorbed into body's working muscles -without them the fluid within the drink will not be fully absorbed and the effects of dehydration will still soon occur. Energy within isotonic drinks comes in the form of glucose. This is used by working muscles as fuel during exercise training. Replenishing them during training will allow you to train longer than if you just took plain water on board. Drinking an isotonic sports drink directly after exercise will allow the body's recovery rate to improve as glycogen re-synthesis will start ASAP.

Hypotonic drinks

What are hypotonic drinks?

Hypotonic are designed to quickly replaces fluids lost through sweating. Unlike isotonic and hypertonic drinks they are low in carbohydrates.

Who are they suitable for?

They are very popular with athletes who need fluid without the boost of carbohydrate. Jockeys and gymnasts use them regularly.

When should I drink them?

The best time to drink them is after a tough exercise work out.

How do hypotonic drinks benefit me?

Hypotonic drinks can directly target the main cause of fatigue in sport - dehydration - by replacing water and energy fast.

Hypertonic drinks

What are hypertonic drinks?

Hypertonic drinks are used to supplement your daily carbohydrate intake. They contain even higher levels of carbs than isotonic and hypotonic drinks.

When should I drink them?

The best time to drink them is after exercise as they help your body to top up on muscle glycogen stores. These are your valuable energy stores. In very long distance events such as marathons, high levels of energy are required.

Can you drink them during exercise?

Yes. Hypertonic drinks can also be taken during exercise to meet the energy requirements. However, it is advisable to only use them during exercise alongside isotonic drinks to replace fluids.