

Operation Hydration
By Stacy Fowler, M.S., C.P.T.
www.eldoradosprings.com

Ah...the beauty of the Colorado Rocky Mountains. It's breathtaking – but it's also dehydrating. Survival is dependent upon water. You can survive for weeks without food – but you'll die within days without water. Water makes up approximately 65% of our body weight – 20% of our bones, 70% of our brains, 75% of our muscles, and 80% of our blood is made up of water; a loss of more than 10% poses a significant health risk and loss of 20% will result in death.

The body's need for water is second only to oxygen. Plus, drinking water keeps the wrinkles away! Now that's hydration motivation! Keep reading for your unique hydration formula!

Water is needed for the following functions:

- Lubricating our joints, muscles and vital organs
- Regulating body temperature
- Aiding in digestion and cell metabolism
- Providing the body with minerals and essential fluids
- Aiding in waste elimination of 2 quarts per day – through skin, lungs, intestines and kidneys
- Cleansing toxins from our bodies

When you don't get enough water you risk dehydration – and this is a common ailment in the dry mountain air of Colorado. The high altitude causes you to breathe more rapidly and lose bodily fluids more quickly. By the time you feel thirsty, your brain's already signaled that your fluid levels are low. Signs of dehydration include thirst, fatigue, nausea, muscle cramps, light headedness and darker urine. What's more, research shows that performance and endurance can drop with as little as 2% dehydration.

So, what to drink? Bottled water, fitness water, sports drinks – what's the best choice?

Bottled Water

The choices are endless, but one clear winner is right here in your own back yard – **Eldorado Natural Spring Water**. I always tell my clients, "Where water is concerned, know the source." Eldorado Water was recently judged the best tasting water in North America and third best in the world. And what about the other bottled waters? Some are no more than bottled tap water – bottled for your convenience only. Eldorado Water originates as rain and snow east of the Continental Divide. The water then enters an aquifer and passes 8,000 feet beneath Eldorado Springs and stays at a constant 76° F. It is alive with naturally

occurring minerals and is not otherwise chemically treated. It is pure water, pure enjoyment.

Fitness Water

Research has shown that some people desire a little flavor in their water in order to stay hydrated. There are numerous flavored waters on the grocery shelves these days. Look for fitness waters that are low in calories and sugars such as Propel Fitness Water.

Sports Drinks

Sports drinks are needed for intense physical exertion exceeding 60 minutes. These drinks carry electrolytes which replace those lost through perspiration. Look for a sports drink with a carbohydrate level of about 6 percent (14 grams per 8 ounces) such as Gatorade.

And now for ***Operation Hydration!*** Here are some tips for staying hydrated daily and when you exercise:

- Can you gulp? A gulp is about 1 ounce. So, 8 gulps is about 8 ounces.
- Follow this simple formula: Divide your body weight by 2. This is how many ounces (gulps) of water you need each day. For example, $140 \text{ lbs} \div 2 = 71$ gulps/ounces of water per day.
- Keep a bottle of water at your desk -- and eat foods high in water content such as lettuce, celery, broccoli, watermelon, apples and green beans.
- Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
- Drink before, during and after you exercise – 17-20 ounces (gulps) before, 7-10 ounces every 15 minutes during, and 20 ounces or gulps after.
- The colder it is outside, the harder your body works to keep warm. This means, you need to drink extra water during colder weather.
- With flu season nearly upon us, you need to remember to hydrate to keep body temperature down. In other words, if you run a fever, you need to drink extra water.
- Caffeinated and alcoholic beverages actually dehydrate because they make your kidneys work harder. So add a glass of water for every one of these beverages you consume.
- Don't drink from the mountain streams – that water contains Giardia, a microorganism that causes debilitating diarrhea. You can, however, splash yourself with the water to stay cool.
- Remember the warning signs for dehydration and take immediate fluid action when you experience any of them.