



# Health & Fitness

By: Christine McInnes

*Disclaimer: This newsletter is based on the information I have discovered through my passion of health and fitness. I am not a health professional. Seek the advice of your physician before starting a new diet and/or exercise program.*

## “Dehydration and Hyponatremia”

For those of you who know me, you're probably not surprised by my topic of choice due to the fact that I have already lectured you about hydration. Seeing how we are in the heart of summer dehydration is a “hot” topic everywhere. You may have seen articles warning you about Hyponatremia (over hydrating / diluting the electrolytes in your body) as well.

When it comes to hydration everyone is different but a good place to start is by drinking half your weight in ounces per day. For example if you are 150 pounds, you should consume 75 ounces of water. If you exercise, you should drink an additional 8 ounces of water or sports drink for every 20 minutes of a moderate to high intensity workout. Water should be sufficient if you are exercising for less than 45 minutes. Otherwise you'll want to replace some of those liquids with a sports drink to replace the electrolytes and carbohydrates that you have lost.

All sports drinks are not created equal. A lot of them are made by soda companies and are loaded with refined sugars, high fructose corn syrup, dyes and artificial flavors. Although they are better than nothing and aid in replacing some electrolytes, it is best to reach for a more natural source, such as: Gatorade Naturals (better alternative to

### Lemon - Lime Sport Drink

By Brendan Brazier featured in “Thrive” The Vegan Nutrition Guide to Optimal Performance in Sports and Life.

Juice of ½ lemon	1 tbsp agave nectar
Juice of ¼ lime	1 tsp coconut oil
3 dates	Sea salt to taste
2 cups water	

Filter out lemon and lime pulp from the juice (if so desired). In a blender, combine all ingredients; process until smooth.

Keep refrigerated for up to two (2) weeks. Some settling may occur, so re-blend before drinking.

Makes about 3 cups.

### Hydration Tests

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#### Urine Test:

Check the color of your urine and if it is dark in color you probably need to consume more liquids. Keep in mind that if you have recently taken a multi-vitamin or eaten foods that have been fortified (i.e. cereal, nutritional yeast, tofu, protein shakes, sports drinks) your urine will be darker while you may be properly hydrated.

#### Weight Test:

Before you head out to exercise, weigh yourself and then again upon completion. If you have a loss in weight, you need to consume more fluids. Example: If you lost 1 pound, you need to replace that loss with 16 ounces of liquids.

#### Pinch Test:

Lay your hand flat palm down and pinch the skin over the base knuckle of your middle finger. If the skin bounces back, your are hydrated. If the skin stays up for a few seconds then you are dehydrated.

#### Questions: (answers on the last page)

1. What percentage of your brain is made up of water?
2. Should you count soda, coffee or tea as part of your daily recommended liquid consumption?

the regular Gatorade), Title, Coconut Water, and my favorite Thrive Lemon-Lime Sport Drink (recipe included). Experiment with different sports drinks to see what works best for you and don't forget to read the ingredients, you may be surprised by what you are drinking. If your fitness goal is to lose weight, make sure you pay attention to the calories and carbohydrates.

You should avoid guzzling your fluids all at once because your body doesn't have enough time or resources to transport it where it needs to go and you'll be taking a trip to the bathroom. It is similar to when we over water a plant. There is too much water to absorb into the soil and the water is overflowing out of the pot. What you want to do is carry a bottle of water around with you and take sips from it, throughout the day. Also teach yourself to drink while exercising, especially if you are doing moderate to high intensity for more than a half hour.

Just like anything, practice makes perfect and you may need to train yourself to properly hydrate. So make drinking water part of your healthy regiment today!

**\*Hyponatremia:** the most common electrolyte disorder in the United States. It is the imbalance of water to salt and is caused by one of three conditions: 1. Total body water increases, but the sodium content remains the same. 2. Both sodium and water content in the body increase, but water gain is greater. 3. Water and sodium are both lost from the body, but the sodium loss is greater. (Source: Google Health)

**\*Electrolytes:** Compounds in the blood that conduct electricity and can be decomposed by it. They include, for example, sodium, potassium, and chloride ions. Electrolyte imbalance can be caused by protracted vomiting, diarrhea, or dehydration. It also may result from failure to administer the correct type or quantity of intravenous fluids. (Source: National Center for Biotechnology Information)

## “Running for Two”

**M**y good friend Leslie Witham is an amazing woman with so much motivation and dedication to running that it's contagious. From fighting asthma to continuing to run during

### 10 Reasons to Drink Water

Source: [allaboutwater.org](http://allaboutwater.org)

1. Water is absolutely essential to the human body's survival. A person can live for about a month without food, but only about a week without water.
2. Water helps to maintain healthy body weight by increasing metabolism and regulating appetite.
3. Water leads to increased energy levels. The most common cause of daytime fatigue is actually mild dehydration.
4. Drinking adequate amounts of water can decrease the risk of certain types of cancers, including colon cancer, bladder cancer, and breast cancer.
5. For a majority of sufferers, drinking water can significantly reduce joint and/or back pain.
6. Water leads to overall greater health by flushing out wastes and bacteria that can cause disease.
7. Water can prevent and alleviate headaches.
8. Water naturally moisturizes skin and ensures proper cellular formation underneath layers of skin to give it a healthy, glowing appearance.
9. Water aids in the digestion process and prevents constipation.
10. Water is the primary mode of transportation for all nutrients in the body and is essential for proper circulation.

her pregnancy (of her first child), she continues to inspire many. She is 33 weeks along during our interview and still hitting the pavement!! I had the privilege of picking her brain and publishing her story.

Leslie started running in 1998 to stay in shape during the post season of college basketball and continued running to improve her endurance in the fall of 1998. She would run anywhere from 2-5 miles at a time. Looking back at her childhood she had wished she started running sooner to help improve her overall game. “Being an asthmatic, in the past... I would make excuses for not being able to run or be athletic when I needed to be. I would even convince myself I couldn’t participate in something or push myself further, because of my asthma. When I entered college, I’m not exactly sure what inspired me, but I remember telling myself, no more excuses, I can beat this! I do not want my asthma to be a handicap, I want to beat it! For the most part, running since 1998... My asthma is non-existent; I was able to improve my lung quality, my endurance and my speed.”

Basketball was Leslie’s favorite athletic past time growing up but as she entered her adult life, it transitioned to running. “Basketball is mainly a group competitive sport and where I still love it and enjoy playing when I can, it’s not my passion.” She says. “Running is competitive sport, but mainly on a personal level, at least the running I participate in. Sure, I might look up ahead while I’m running and see another runner and the competitive edge gets to me to pass that person, or see how quickly I can approach them, but that is for my own personal gain. No one needs to rely on me to make the basket in running. It is up to me to cross the finish line at the goal time I sought out to reach. If I do not reach my goal, I can only focus harder on what I need to do for next time.” She went on to say, “ I actually enjoy running solo the most. It is a time to release my thoughts; just me and the road. No distractions, no group competitiveness, and my own pace... it’s so exhilarating! I have been very fortunate in the past to have two excellent running buddies. Oddly enough, both were under 5’3” in height and with me being almost 5’11”, it is a rarity to be able to run with someone. My philosophy there is, if you cannot run with someone and carry on a conversation, then you’re running to fast... I’m all about the experience.”

Nov of 2009, marked the date that Leslie crossed the

## **Recommended Websites**

*For health, fitness & motivation!*

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### **iberb.com**

Use promo code: TIG849 and get \$5.00 off your bill!!

**sparkpeople.com** I could do a whole newsletter about this website! Explore it for yourself and see.

### **mypyramid.gov**

They have made a lot of changes, you should check it out!

### **eatwellguide.org**

Find local organic resources (restaurants, markets, cooking classes...)

### **nomeatathlete.com**

This site is put together by a runner who has become a vegetarian - filled with tips, recipes and his personal experiences.

### **seedanerun.com**

And boy does Dane run... a lot!!

### **goveg.com**

Take the 30 Day Vegetarian Challenge, check this website for more details and order your Vegetarian starter kit.

### **mcmillanrunning.com**

Provides a pace calculator to help determine realistic pace goals and pace training.

### **coolrunning.com**

See what races are going on in your area!



finish line to her biggest accomplishment... The Manchester Marathon! The training was a challenging 18 week schedule starting around 45 miles a week and peaking at 60 miles a week with Sunday being a long run ranging from 10-20 miles. Prior to marathon training, Leslie was running 30-40 miles a week. As you can tell, the 26.2 mile race was only part of her athletic accomplishment. By training hard, she was able to race easy and cross the finish line at 4:23:41 while singing “The Way You Make Me Feel” by Michael Jackson as it played on her iPhone. I am lucky we were able to run a couple weekly training runs together including our Sunday long runs and the entire marathon. On one of our training runs we came up with our slogan “26 point 2 wild and crazy girls!”

When I asked Leslie if and how she rewarded herself for her physical accomplishments this is what she said “It’s all self rewarding... It’s my goal, my accomplishment and to complete it, that is the reward. To be able to go out and run 8 miles... The way I feel when I do my last stretch, that is the reward. Knowing that I did not make any excuses, whether it’s raining/snowing or too hot/too cold.”

It’s important to track your exercise and caloric intake. Not only does this help you stay on track but it will help you see any patterns in your routine and see where you could improve. Not to mention it’s self motivating. Leslie uses her Outlook Calendar to plan her exercise schedule and then updates it as she completes her routine. She includes things such as average pace, distance, total time of exercise and temperature/weather. She loves when she’s able to look back and see that she ran a 12 miler in a blizzard. Once Lydia is born, she will utilize her iPhone application, Lose-IT, to keep track how many calories, fat, carbohydrates, etc, she consume daily. This program can be set to maintain current weight or lose 1-2 pounds a week.

Pregnancy is a beautiful experience but there is no denying that it makes physical activities more strenuous and like Leslie mentioned during our interview, it affects everyone differently. Here is what she had to say about her personal experience with running while being pregnant. “When I first found out I was pregnant, after the overall excitement, of course, I thought, I wonder



*Leslie and I enjoying the beautiful views during the Manchester Marathon*



*Only 2.2 miles to the finish line!!!*



*Singing “The Way You Make Me Feel” by Michael Jackson.*

how this is going to affect my running routine. Immediately, I spoke to my Doctor about it, who basically stated that if I ran prior to pregnancy, regularly, then to continue running during pregnancy shouldn't be an issue; however, I need to listen to my body... My entire first trimester of pregnancy I was nauseous. Throwing up multiple times a day, I was unable to stay comfortable. Needless to say, my running routine suffered from this. I barely did ten miles a week. When I entered the second trimester, it was like a switch was flicked and I was back to my old self. I had more energy and I was not feeling sick. I knew then, I would be able to start setting running goals again, though slightly modified due to the fact I am pregnant... I maxed out at 8 miles and set a goal for 20 miles a week, which, I was glad I was able to maintain comfortably. Now that I am 33 weeks pregnant... and 'The Belly' is growing more and more daily, I find



*Leslie - 34 weeks.  
Getting ready to go running.*

there is much more discomfort. I have now set a max mileage of 4-5 miles and 10 miles a week. I am hoping that I will be able to maintain this up until I deliver; however, if not, my focus is my pregnancy; a healthy, successful pregnancy. I will be able to continue with my running regime once I have the baby, so if at any point in time I feel I should be stopping, maybe going to a fast walk verses running, I won't hesitate... I am so thankful that I have been able to continue running during my pregnancy. With that, though, I am still anxious to run long distances again. I have my heart set to run the Vermont City Marathon (Burlington, Vermont) in May of 2011." Her goal time is 4 hours flat. I know with her drive and determination she will be able to reach that goal with Lydia and her husband Tom, cheering her on every step of the way.

Her advice to you is "believe in yourself and if you find that you're constantly making excuses, you are in control. It is up to you to decide if the excuse is legitimate ... or just a way to avoid your goal. Sure, we all might be lazy at times and feel we deserve time off, and I agree with that, but if it is happening more often than not... maybe new goals need to be set. Another thing that I feel is important is consistency. Aim for three days a week, or four. Plan out what you want to accomplish. Also, try to mix up your routes/mileage. By running the same 3 mile route, 3 days a week for a whole year, your body will adapt and it won't necessarily be the workout you expected and you will probably stop seeing results. Change up the mileage, elevations, and run the route a different way... not only will it show you results with regularity and consistency, but it will also make your experience more interesting because it's different."

For more information or to share your thoughts please contact me via e-mail. I would love to hear from you!!

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#### Answers:

1. Your brain is approximately 80% water. This is the same as a grape and we know what happens to grapes when they become dehydrated... raisins anyone?
2. Absolutely Not!! Liquids containing caffeine along with alcohol are diuretics, which prevents water from being utilized by your body. You can however, count juice, herbal teas and soups as part of your daily recommended liquid consumption.