



June 14, 2010 – Grand Rapids, MI

## Hydrate

Summer is the time of year when we sweat more than usual. Saturday was 76 degrees with 100% humidity at 7 a.m. when I went for a run, and I soaked a bath towel before I stopped sweating. When we exercise, we notice. But when we work out in the sun (while wearing our sunblock, of course), we really don't pay attention to how much we're sweating. When it's hot and dry, the moisture can evaporate before we can sense how much fluid we've lost. Dehydration can be a real problem and even more so when it's humid.

Drinking fluids is essential. All fluids, including caffeinated beverages, are okay. Caffeine doesn't dehydrate—it just makes you urinate more. You might also consider a sports drink with minerals such as sodium, potassium, and magnesium. That will help make sure you avoid muscle cramps later in the evening.

And although a cold beer tastes great after a hard day in the sun, take it easy. Alcohol is a diuretic, so it will add to your dehydration. Be sure to drink lots of non-alcoholic fluids to replace what you've lost.

How much should you drink? Typically the recommendation for daily fluid intake is one-half your body weight in ounces—if you weigh 150 pounds, you need 75 ounces a day. When it's hot and you're outside, it should be four ounces every 15 minutes. All water? All sports drinks? Mix them up because life and your body are all about balance. If you don't want the calories, find a calorie-free sports drink. Then alternate water with the sports drink every 15 minutes. The key to surviving the summer is to hydrate.

What are you prepared to do today?

**Dr. Chet**

P.S. Did you know today is Flag Day? If you haven't put out Old Glory, today is the day. Paula always likes today because it's also her birthday. Happy Birthday to Paula and our friend, Dick Greenway.

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