



The summer is here and as anyone living in Arizona knows, it gets really hot, especially on the tennis courts. We want to remind our members about the importance of hydration, both on and off the tennis court this time of year. This article provides some tips to help reduce the chance of dehydration when you are playing tennis this summer.

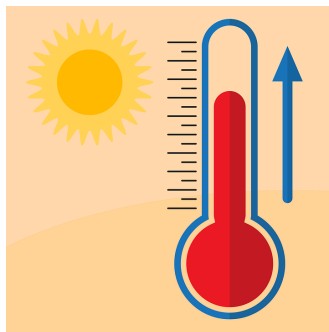
According to Dr. Alexis Colvin of the USTA's sport science committee, the first thing is to make sure that your fitness level is appropriate for the level of tennis you are playing. That requires a medical evaluation and cross training to maintain your fitness when you're not actually hitting the tennis ball.

So assuming that we are fit and ready to play, the second thing is: stay hydrated. Don't wait until you're thirsty before drinking water or a sports drink. Hydration really starts not only a couple of hours before, but maybe even the day before your tennis match.

But how much fluid does the average, healthy adult living in a temperate climate need? Well, the U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine determined that an adequate daily fluid intake is:

- About 15.5 cups (3.7 liters) of fluids a day for men
- About 11.5 cups (2.7 liters) of fluids a day for women

These recommendations cover fluids from water, other non alcoholic beverages and food. About 20% of daily fluid intake usually comes from food and the rest from drinks. If you are exercising you may need even more fluids.



And finally, it's important to protect yourself from the sun while you are on court. Wear sunscreen and a hat along with light-colored clothing that's going to wick away sweat; remember, darker clothing is going to absorb the heat and make you feel even hotter. In Arizona, it almost goes without saying, but by all means minimize your outdoor activities between the hours of about 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the summer when the sun is more intense.

Listen to your body: if you start to feel dizzy or begin cramping, it may be a sign of dehydration. It's best to not take a chance, get off the court and in the shade. In addition to sipping water, you may want to have some ice bags to put under your armpits or in between your legs to help pull down your core temperature when things get too hot. Please educate yourself on heat related medical conditions and prevention measures, beyond the tips provided in this article, in order to stay safe both on and off the courts this summer!