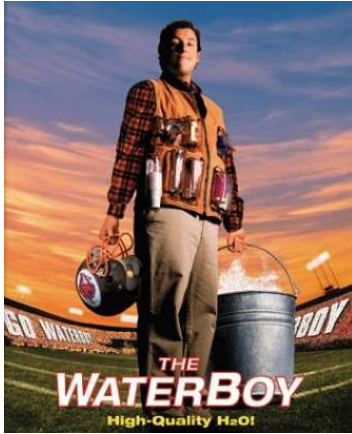


HIGH QUALITY H₂O!! By the water boy Matt Gurney!



"HEY WATER BOY"!! So we have had a few encouraging weeks of some heat and bright sunlight, get in! Our good friend's at weather control have enlightened us that this summer is going to be a scorcher! (We hope). This optimistic assumption can result in a few health factors that we need to keep tabs on while we enjoy the summer months. As religious gym users, we all should take a look at our current hydration status. It is surely obvious, our physiological make-up constitutes to 70% water, so it is imperative while exercising especially during warmer climates to ensure we consume plenty of fluid. It is well publicised that in order for standard hydration 2 litres of water a day is required (8-12 glasses approx). The main mechanism your body has for regulating its temperature during exercise is sweating. As sweat evaporates from your skin it takes with it some of the body heat you have generated through exercising, helping to cool the body. Even light exercise causes fluid loss, but increasing the intensity of our exercise or exercising for longer periods of time will increase the volume we lose as sweat. In addition, when blessed with the occasional hot spell temperature and humidity also affect the amount we sweat. For all gym users looking to gain their beach bodies, a combination of losing water and electrolytes will increase heart rate resulting in a raised body temperature and a decrease in energy production thus resulting in a decline in performance due to premature fatigue. So without getting to "Techy" try consuming water with electrolytes found in isotonic drinks such as lucazade in order to sustain energy production and eliminate the risk of fatigue due to dehydration. Try consuming approx 125 – 140 ml every 15 – 20 minutes during vigorous exercise. It is difficult to completely replace all of the water lost during exercise. Generally speaking, exercising individuals lose between 0.5 and 1.5 litres of sweat in 1 hour of exercise. In the majority of cases, the average person is definitely dehydrated when he/she has finished exercising. So to summarise, while exercising in the heat ensure your well hydrated before, during and post exercise to ensure your hard work does not become hindered by dehydration.

Need a little help? – By Claire Bishop

It isn't unusual for exercisers to get stuck in a rut with their exercise regimes. For best results it is recommended that you change your exercise programme every six to eight weeks, this stops your body adapting to the routine and will enable you to keep challenging yourself.

If you are following a programme designed for you by one of the Sportspark Fitness Advisors then we can review your programme for you free of charge in order for you to start seeing results and continually working your body. If you would like to book a review, please ask one of the Fitness Advisor.

If you are not currently following a programme and feel a bit lost and not seeing the results that you hoped for then try booking in with one of us to have a personalised programme. We can even take measurements such as body fat percentage so we can really kick start your routine. To find out what programme would suit you best just speak to an advisor for more information. Remember, all programmes come with free reviews so we can be there with you every step of the way.

If you really want to push yourself and need some extra motivation then personal training is a great option. We are here for your every need, whether it's to give you new ideas, push you to the next level or just work out with you for support. See a Fitness Advisor for your free consultation.

If you want to try something a bit different then why not try an exercise class? Throughout the week we run different classes including free daytime circuit training, evening circuit training, free ab attack and FILL for the over 50's. And if you're feeling really hardcore then you could give Bootcamp a try!

10 top health tips for feeling great this summer! – By James Richards

1) Get Active – after a long winter try doing some form of activity for a short time each day. Exercise increases serotonin levels within your body which will improve your mood and make you feel more positive. After a long, cold winter start off slowly adding a short period of activity into your daily routine. You can build this up over time, aiming for at least 30mins of activity each day. You could try walking, or swimming or even join the gym and get advice from the professionals!

Continued on centre pages...

Continued from front page..

2) Drink more – there is a lot of hype surrounding how much water you should consume each day. The truth is that your body will function most efficiently when you are hydrated (think of how a flower wilts when it has no water) but everyone's requirements are different. So forget about litres and volume and concentrate instead more on the colour of your urine (yes, that means you are going to have to look!) Your urine should be a light, clear straw colour; if it is cloudy or dark then you will need to increase your fluid intake because you are probably dehydrated – start off by adding one extra glass of water a day, and reassess every few days. You will soon learn how much you should be drinking when you look down the loo!

3) Make a goal...and reach it – achieving things makes us feel good so why not set yourself a goal that you know you could reach if you just put in that little bit of extra effort. Try not to focus on your main target though because the pressure can be too much! For example, if you are trying to lose 10lbs in weight, instead of setting your goal as 'drop 1-2lbs this week', set a relevant but obtainable goal of 'jog for 2 minutes more' or 'swim an extra 10 lengths'. These relatively small changes will add up and can make a huge difference to your overall target!

4) Try something new – when we do something different, our brains have to 'think' about what our bodies are doing rather than them just ticking over on autopilot. Summer is a great time of year to try and rebalance your life and doing something new is a great place to start! If, for example, you are a regular gym go-er you may find swimming a challenge and you might be surprised at how quickly you forget about work when you are coordinating breathing, pulling and kicking! You could even try something completely new, taking up an activity such as yoga can seem like a 'cop out' to many fitness fanatics however you would be amazed at the difference it makes to your mental alertness, which in turn can result in a much more efficient and effective workout.

5) Go on holiday – O.K. so now might not be the best time to spend a few hundred pounds jetting off to sunnier climes, however why not be a little inventive and create a 'holiday at home'? Just because you are not in Spain doesn't mean that you shouldn't take some time out of your usual regime! Try spending some quality time with your partner or friends. Go for a walk and grab a pub lunch whilst you are out – it will make you feel like you are away! If you can't take time off work, an excellent way to feel as if you are away is to invite some friends over for a BBQ after work and soak up the fun filled atmosphere.

6) Eat seasonal – the summer time produces loads of luscious fruits and veg for you to get stuck into. The obvious choices are berries which are full of antioxidants which will help detoxify your body from the comfort food consumed throughout the long cold winter. Many salad vegetables are coming into season and make healthy, filling accompaniments to your favourite BBQ'd treats!

A great way to steer yourself towards eating nutritious foods is look at it's colour – the brighter the food on your plate is, the more vitamins and minerals it has to offer you (imagine a plate of steak and kidney pie with mashed potato next to a plate of salmon, new potatoes, salad and beetroot!)

7) Catch some rays – a warm, sunny summer's day offers obvious benefits; it's generally regarded as an instantaneous mood booster (sunlight encourages the brain to increase serotonin production – a natural feel good chemical)! Waking up to a bright day can encourage you to spend more time outside, which in itself has a multitude of benefits. Suntan lotion is an essential summer item, and should be your priority when spending time outside; however don't be scared of spending time outside when it's sunny. The body needs a whole host of minerals and vitamins in order to function, most of these can be acquired through a complete and varied diet; the likes of Vitamin D for example are produced in the body when we are exposed to sunlight and therefore it is essential to our health and immune system!

8) Have a BBQ – Ok so some of you may relate BBQ's as slightly un-healthy, however the food is grilled therefore reduces some of the fat content from the produce. Also BBQ's are a great way to show off some culinary skills by creating fresh seasonal salads and dips rich in vital vitamins and goodness all aimed to aid your overall well being and health, again a healthy way to spend an evening. BONUS. Socialising with friends will help reduce stress and take your mind away from routine and all of life's worries in order to encourage a positive mind set.

9) Morning runs – Going for a morning jog or bike is a great way to kick-start your metabolism and set yourself up for the day, especially when the sun has got his hat on! Running before breakfast will encourage fat burning. After the night of no food, the body has no source of energy left to burn other than fat reserves therefore this is the only fuel source left to use for exercise. Ensure that you are appropriately hydrated as this will decrease the risk of heat stress, also this will stop you becoming dehydrated therefore slowing you down and preventing any further illness. Also exercising in the morning will ultimately wake you up effectively therefore preparing your mind and body for the working/leisurely day ahead!

10) Fun Factor – Laughing and generally having fun releases endorphins in the brain which help promote a happier more positive look on life in general. So ensuring there is enough fun filled activity in your lifestyle can help elevate stress levels therefore allowing you to enjoy a healthier lifestyle. Socialising with friends, going out for meals as a treat and simply staying in watching a good comedy are all good examples of increasing the fun factor.. So laugh up guys!