



The Athlete's Plate: Mastering Nutrition and Hydration with Kelly Jones MS, RD, CSSD, LDN (ep – 44)

[00:00:00] **Kelly Jones:** There's a lot of hype around all different electrolytes right now, and they are important. We do need to focus more on things like potassium and magnesium and zinc. However, when it comes to sweat losses, unless you're doing ultra-endurance activities, sodium really is the thing we need to be replacing to maintain a healthy fluid balance.

[00:00:21] **Ginger Hultin:** Welcome to The Good Clean Nutrition Podcast. I'm your host, Ginger Hultin, an integrative registered dietitian nutritionist. On the last episode, we did a deep dive into protein with fellow registered dietitian and board-certified specialist in sports dietetics, Kelly Jones.

Today, Kelly and I are focusing on hydration and relationship to food for athletes. I have a patient who I just started working with and the number one thing she wanted to focus on in our work together was energy. And she put on her intake form that she was drinking one to two cups of water a day. I wanted to start with what I saw was the easiest thing and I said, Why are you not drinking any water?

And she told me, I just really don't like it and I don't feel thirsty. But I let her know that I strongly believe that was zapping her energy in major ways. So we started to set some goals. I would never take somebody from one to two cups a day up to ten. It's really going to mess with how much you're getting up during the night or how you're balancing your intake throughout the day.

So we increased to three to four cups, up from one to two, and worked our way up towards seven to eight. And as she increased her hydration, her energy skyrocketed. And it was such a simple fix that a lot of people don't realize. Hydration plays critical roles in energy and your cellular health. So it's a major area that I focus on with my clients.

Kelly, in the last episode, we talked all about protein and it really shaped the way that I think about. My client's protein needs. And I think it'll change the way that I practice. It was fun to hear all the updates on the latest research and how things have changed over time regarding recommendations.

But I want to learn more from you today about the critical role of nutrition and hydration specifically for sports and, and families of young athletes. So you were a college athlete and you're still very active.

[00:02:17] **Kelly Jones:** I was a competitive swimmer growing up and I swam division one in college for four years.

Uh, swimming definitely is one of those sports that's a little bit more intense, full body, two a days. You don't really rest. There's no real off season throughout the year. You get, you know, a few weeks at the end of the season, and then you get right back into training again. A confusing sport for some people too, because as I go back and I speak to some teams now, uh, I still get questions about, are we really sweating that much in the water?

You just don't notice it as much when you're in the water, which is true for anyone at the beach or playing outside in the pool. And then from college, something's a little bit difficult to do. a couple times a week even once you get into real life. So, uh, I got into running a little bit more and really started to see personally, wow, my sweat and salt sweat rates are much higher than I would have imagined.

Uh, just cause doing longer distances with running, you could kind of see the sweat in your clothes. You can taste it more on your mouth. It feels sandy on your skin. And that was never something that I had experienced before. So it really helps me relate a little bit more to my clients and recognize how I was probably under under refueling my sodium needs as a competitive swimmer chill.

[00:03:32] **Ginger Hultin:** That's so interesting. And you also more recently have worked with Major League Baseball.

[00:03:38] **Kelly Jones:** Yes. So I was with the Phillies organization for a few years and now I'm consulting with MLB's umpire administration, which is also a very unique situation. A lot of people don't think about umpires and refs. and how they don't get a rest during games.

There's no sit in the dugout for half an inning. It's on the field the entire time. The home plate umpire just squatting constantly. So you take kind of the athlete needs and you can exacerbate that for them sometimes too, in terms of their potential sweat losses on the field.

[00:04:06] **Ginger Hultin:** Right. And it could be hot and they're just on their feet.

They're out there all the time. That is really fascinating. So, Okay, can I lump them into into baseball players?

Kelly Jones: Yeah.

Ginger Hultin: Okay, perfect, perfect. How do you talk to different athletes about fueling, whether it's protein, calories, hydration? So let's say baseball versus swimming. How do you approach that?

[00:04:29] **Kelly Jones:** Very different sports, right? When you're in the pool, you are moving your entire body. your cardiorespiratory system is really being stressed out versus something like baseball. There's a lot more attention and focus involved there. And something that I speak to sports like that, or even if you think about golf, um, you might be at a lower intensity for the majority of the time that you're spent participating in your sport, but your mental energy expenditure is going to be much higher.

That really strong intention to focus and the stress that goes along with it. definitely increases energy needs past what, you know, your tracking device is going to log for a calorie expenditure. So that's something where it can be a little bit harder to pinpoint exactly where people need to be from a calorie perspective.

But protein wise, we still really need to focus on higher protein meals so that When they're paired with those carbohydrates, it's going to sustain for the duration of those longer competitive periods.

[00:05:29] **Ginger Hultin:** When I am doing cardio, I feel like I'm listening to music or what have you. It's more like just plug in and go.

But when I'm weightlifting, I do actually afterwards feel very mentally exhausted because I'm just I feel like I'm just concentrating so intensely the entire time. Is that what you're talking about? Like, am I on track with that? Absolutely. Yeah.

[00:05:51] **Kelly Jones:** That's so interesting. No, and that's true for weight training because you're thinking more, especially if you're lifting heavier, you're thinking more about every movement.

You're putting that mental effort into what you're doing versus, you know, if we're comparing to swimming like we were before, or if you're running an actual race, there's going to be more mental focus there than when you're just training. But Absolutely. There's that difference. There's that mental exhaustion.

There's even some studies on Zumba or dance fitness and how it's great for your brain because you have to pay more attention to the movements you're doing. And there's a little bit more focus and attention. I think that can translate to a lot of these sports too, where there is more focus, where yes, it's mentally exhausting, but there might be some cognitive benefits long term too.

[00:06:32] **Ginger Hultin:** The brain burns a lot of calories. So is that what's going on? Like it's actually increasing your nutrient needs.

[00:06:38] **Kelly Jones:** Yes, absolutely. And like our muscles, our brain prefers carbohydrates. So if it runs out of carbs, can we survive on ketones? Yes, but that's not necessarily optimal to having that better attention and focus during exercise is supported by carbohydrates and good hydration is actually a part of that too.

[00:06:56] **Ginger Hultin:** And ketones are the, how would you describe them? They're the compounds that are created to fuel your brain when you don't have enough carbohydrates.

[00:07:04] **Kelly Jones:** Exactly. So turning fat mostly into fuel for the brain produces these ketones. And that's kind of our, our backup energy. I like to call it for people.

[00:07:14] **Ginger Hultin:** A lot of people don't realize that we, you know, the most common thing you would, you would hear of is like a ketogenic diet.

That is true. low carb to create ketones for the brain to burn fat. It's this whole thing, but actually your body can go in and out of it every day.

[00:07:28] **Kelly Jones:** Right. I mean, and if you're especially if you're doing really exhaustive exercises, doing two a day workouts that are burning a lot of energy and your carb intake isn't up to speed with that, it doesn't have to be as

low as what a standard low carb diet might recommend or if you get sick for a few days.

Your body might get into that, that phase too.

[00:07:45] **Ginger Hultin:** Yeah, it just is a natural metabolic state. Do you find generally that professional athletes have knowledge about nutrition, that they know what their protein needs are?

[00:07:54] **Kelly Jones:** It depends. Some people want to follow like a plant-based trend, for example, just because it's trendy, not necessarily because they looked into it and they think that it's better for the environment or anything like that.

They're like, Oh, well, I saw someone doing it and they did it for performance and they performed well. So I want to do it too. And again, just kind of do a 180. I feel like after a certain documentary came out, a lot of people jumped on that bandwagon without any gradual shift to a plant-based diet. And There was a lot of education on, okay, yes, eating more plants is great for you.

Here's how we need to do that for you. Since you're not doing this for animal welfare, environmental reasons, we're going to slowly transition you so that this makes sense and can still support your body. So in that case, I think that there could be some protein and nutrient gaps when people switch their diet really quickly.

And then there's, you know, other people who you might hear of in the professional world who are jumping on intermittent fasting when they have such high energy needs and really want to be supporting recovery around the clock. And it can be hard to get through to them sometimes because of how these trends get sensationalized by certain individuals who really are just blessed and naturally phenomenal athletes and, you know, happen to just be making it even though they're following a trend like that.

So while I'm not saying intermittent fasting is bad for everyone, for a professional athlete. It's not something I'm recommending. And so those are a couple of the trends that I find are a little bit harder when people just kind of drop things and try to hop on them right away.

[00:09:25] **Ginger Hultin:** The whole, it worked for me, therefore you should do it is not generally the best place to go.

No. So there's professional athletes, but then there's like everyday athletes like you and I perhaps. And then there's also student athletes. And that's a group that I really worry about because they have so many different needs and they're growing and learning. How do you approach those different groups of people?

[00:09:49] **Kelly Jones:** There's nuances to all of them. And even with student athletes, are we talking about high school? Are we talking about college? Because those are totally different scenarios too, where high school, the growth and development is so extreme and you have less. times throughout the day that you can even stop to eat.

You're still relying on your parents and parents might have different goals for what they're doing and, you know, put those philosophies or ideas onto their kids even though that's not supportive of their sport. So I think there's a lot of education in that age range on eating frequency. How do we fit enough in throughout the day?

Making sure that parents understand the true needs of a student athlete versus an average student or an adult. And then when you get into the college space, you have these kids who, you know, even though they're adults, they're really kind of still kids who are now on their own. They're making all of their own food decisions.

It's navigating a new college campus. Some teams are given full spreads for, you know, multiple meals a day, and they have wonderful access to food. And then there's others who are at different levels or even sometimes at a division one program and might still be dealing with food insecurity. So there's a lot to consider in that population to ensure that not only do they understand here's what you need, but how are you able to access that with your schedule and just what's available to you?

[00:11:07] **Ginger Hultin:** It's a great point. Food access also overlaps in both populations. So let's say that you have, and maybe I'd let you choose, uh, whether it's a high school athlete or a, or a college athlete. So you have a student athlete. How do they need to fuel differently than someone that athletics is not part of their life at that stage?

[00:11:26] **Kelly Jones:** Yeah. And I like that you're comparing it to someone who's not an athlete. I think a lot of high school athletes, especially will start comparing themselves to their non athlete friends. And. This is where, you know, disordered eating and eating disorders become more prevalent, and

there's a much higher risk factor in that middle school, high school age period, for sure.

And we can see a lot of comparisons in the lunchroom of, oh, well, they only ate that much, so maybe I don't need to be eating, and like getting just really self conscious. Kids just feel at that age. There's a lot of pressure. You're figuring out who you are. Your body's changing. And also you're trying to support sports and be successful in school.

There's just a lot of pressures and different things going on. And I think at that age, we really need to do a better job communicating and better support coaches and athletic trainers who are there more often and communicating this in an effective way to their athletes. That's within their scope of you're an athlete.

You need to feel like an athlete. Don't worry about what other people are doing. Here's what you are doing to your body every day on top of the growth and development that's still happening. I find too that with girls and even girls parents, there's this idea that because maybe they've reached their peak height, that growth and development isn't still happening as much as it is for boys, because boys are still growing taller so much in that high school period.

But in reality, there is so much change still going on in the body. And we need to support that on top of all this mental energy we've been talking about expending, uh, throughout the day, and then that actual physical energy expended for their sport, too.

[00:13:00] **Ginger Hultin:** Their calorie and protein needs must be exponential.

And then, like you mentioned, some people are doing what you were referring to as two a day, which is practice or performance multiple times a day.

[00:13:13] **Kelly Jones:** In high school, I feel like this is becoming more common. And again, in swimming, it's definitely very prevalent that you're going to start in high school having, you know, maybe three mornings a week where you're swimming in the morning, then you go to school, you go through your school day, and then you're either practicing or competing in the afternoon too.

So swimming's usually five nights a week, Saturday practice, and then some kids are also doing three mornings a week. So The biggest gaps I tend to see are that high school students in general don't love to wake up and eat in the morning. It's a struggle, right? I even remember, maybe for me it was more

middle school, my mom being like, you have to have something before you go to school.

Like, what can we do? How do we figure this out? And now I'm helping other people navigate that as well, but. Before that morning practice, you can't start your day in a deficit. That's just not going to work for attention and focus in school, never mind performing well as an athlete and feeling good in terms of mental health.

It all gets interconnected. So there's a lot of education with those two days about let's start on our morning with something. It could be a banana. It could be a glass of juice. It could be dried fruit. It can be pretzels, whatever you can tolerate before that early morning practice. And then if it's over an hour, we want carbs during that workout too.

Or if you can't stomach a pre workout snack, we want you to have a hydration beverage during that exercise. And then an empty stomach. a really well put together breakfast to have between that practice and school. Because you're not only fueling yourself for the day, but you're also recovering from what you just put your body through.

[00:14:47] **Ginger Hultin:** You're talking really about a fueling schedule. So thinking about how you're going to fuel your general health, and your school, and your brain, and your sports throughout the day, every day.

[00:15:02] **Kelly Jones:** Yeah, the schedules are a huge part because as much as we want to talk about intuitive eating and things like that, it's just not realistic when your schedule is so packed.

So it might be Here's what we're going to try to do before morning practice. Here's examples of what you can eat right after. And then the school day itself can be such a struggle. You have some kids who literally are having their lunch period at 9 30 a. m. at some of these schools, whereas others it's at one o'clock.

We need to find times throughout the day where it's okay. between what classes or do you have a study period that we have a super robust snack that you're going to be able to have so that you could make it through this long school day. So that's often part of this fueling schedule too. And then we might have, you know, okay, for your two a day practices, here's what a fueling schedule looks like.

And then if you have a competition versus practice after school, here's how we're going to tweak that. And it's just having that guide. relieves a lot of the stress from parents and athletes so that they can feel more confident in what they're doing.

[00:16:07] **Ginger Hultin:** It's no surprise that Orgain is America's number one plant based protein powder brand because their products are really delicious and made with clean ingredients. I love their organic plant-based protein powder for my clients because it tastes amazing and it's also packed with nutrients. It comes in a large variety of flavors and offers up to 21 grams of high-quality plant protein.

It has a complete amino acid profile. There's no added sugar and no artificial sweeteners. Visit [Orgain.com](https://www.orgain.com) to learn more.

Ginger Hultin: Whatever sports schedule after school and so what I hear is that sort of explodes dinner and I do see a lot of reliance on fast food. Not that that's a problem, but it can be if it's every single night and you're feeling out of control with it. People's schedules are so full. How do you help families balance the complexity, especially of multiple athletes?

[00:17:03] **Kelly Jones:** Yeah, at first, you know, like to take away the shame and let people feel okay and making the decisions that they've made. or might feel right in the moment. If they're used to running through certain fast food drive thrus often, I don't want them to feel like I'm judging them for that and that they did anything wrong.

But it is, I think, something where we do need to get the kids involved a little bit more. They do have a lot on their plate and we do want them to have a social life, but parents can't just be chefs all day long too. I even have my six-year-old making his, his own lunch at least once a week. That's one thing he has to do.

So that it becomes easier and easier as he gets older that that can just be an automatic thing that he does after we make dinner or it's something that you can do ahead of the week looking into the week. But then it's also are there things at your local grocery store that you can purchase that make mealtime a little bit easier?

Is it some of those things that are Mostly prepared, but you just have to throw them in the oven, right? It's not as expensive as going out to eat or doing takeout sometimes, but it's a little bit pricier than doing everything on your own, but it's all so much easier. And then you have that time back.

It's also things like making freezer burritos ahead of time. And then maybe that's something that you have to add overnight and it's okay. This is our grab and go dinner tonight is we're doing these freezer burritos with. Uh, fruit or uh, premade smoothie on the side and that's everything, but he's on the go and we're eating in the car, but we feel a little bit better and we're recovering better and you know, that's our solution for them.

[00:18:33] **Ginger Hultin:** There might be more options than people realize and I, I'm with you on the fast food thing. I have so many times worked with my clients to say, okay, let's look at a menu together. What are you typically getting? Okay, this is the nutrients in that. How can we make some easy swaps to make it fit into your eating goals better?

[00:18:51] **Kelly Jones:** Absolutely. Yeah, there's definitely some places that have a vegetarian option or there's salads on the menu and you can get a vegetable or baked potato. So sometimes we just work with people to make it fit. And I will say too, especially with some of those college athletes, sometimes when they're on the road, the bus is pulling into a rest stop and it's here's your meal money, go figure it out.

And fast food is really all that's there. So it's helping them navigate what's the best option in that moment.

[00:19:15] **Ginger Hultin:** You mentioned something really important about intuitive eating and one of the principles of intuitive eating is not eating if you're not hungry, right? And then stopping when you're full. So those are two very important principles.

But when you're a student athlete or you're teenager, you're not hungry in the morning, you do need actually to be on a fueling schedule and you need to be strategic about your fueling. So how do you handle a good relationship with food and their body with student athletes?

[00:19:45] **Kelly Jones:** For everyone, intuitive eating should be more nuanced than social media might let it out to be.

Some people can interpret it as a set of rules versus something that should be a little bit more, more nuanced person to person. And then when you think about student athletes, there's this whole other layer, especially when you're thinking about relationship with food and body. So I like to focus a lot with athletes on the practical hunger aspect.

When you read through all of the information on hunger and intuitive eating, practical hunger is a big part of it. So. Are you physically or biologically, however you want to phrase it, hungry right now? Maybe not, but if you don't eat now, how are you going to feel later? And this not only goes for, okay, I might not have woken up hungry in the morning, I should have something before I practice, but also a lot of athletes and just active individuals, especially if you're active outside in the heat, might deal with post exercise appetite suppression.

So you go, you do a really long or intense workout. and your body absolutely is hungry for food and nutrients, but your appetite just is not there. That doesn't mean don't eat because you don't feel hungry right then. It means, well, if I don't eat now, I'm not going to recover well. I'm probably not going to feel as well for my workouts tomorrow.

That all that effort I put into that training, not optimizing that because I'm not fueling. And then I always say hunger tends to like slap people on the face one to two hours later, and then the ravenous and can't make a reasonable decision about what to eat. So it's practical in that moment, post workout, even though if you're not hungry.

to have some sort of nutrition and that's where we pull in things like smoothies and yogurts and yogurt beverages are an easy go to then if you don't feel like chewing food but you're starting that recovery process and then once it is you know you do start to feel that hunger come back it's not so intense and you can have a more intuitive decision about what you're going to make and how you're going to build that plate for performance with something you enjoy and something that's functional too.

[00:21:39] **Ginger Hultin:** Yeah, it sounds a bit more nuanced for our athletes. It just gets a little bit more complex.

[00:21:46] **Kelly Jones:** Absolutely. And another thing too is on the rest days, I find people nervous to eat one when they're feeling so hungry because, well, I didn't exercise today. Why am I starving all day long? And it's Really, you're not dealing with any of that post exercise appetite suppression, and now your body has this opportunity to make up for what it might have been missing all day long.

And not just student athletes, this could be anyone on a rest day. People need to better welcome hunger when it is more present throughout the day and not question it so much, and use these tactics we're talking about of building

balanced meals that include protein and carbs and color all those antioxidants and continue to build that balance together in a way that's going to satisfy the hunger and satisfy your preferences.

[00:22:30] **Ginger Hultin:** I love the concept of welcome your hunger. Like being hungry is not a bad thing. It's just your body telling you something and you can address it in a way that can be really empowering. Absolutely. And then you get into puberty and big periods of growth and development as preteens and teens. There's just so much weight gain that needs to happen there and height gain and fat mass, especially for girls.

How do you handle that? Like, how do you talk to teenagers about that, especially if they're athletes?

[00:23:01] **Kelly Jones:** First, I'll backtrack and say I think we need to talk to kids about this more before they go through that phase. I think when they're learning about puberty and all these changes their body's gonna go through, I think it should be You're going to gain fat and that's normal, right?

Like this is a time where your hips are going to get bigger. Just talk about these changes that are going to happen to start to normalize them. I think that alone can make a difference, right? It's not just about getting a period, it's your body's going to change your no longer going to be, you know, maybe a skinny little child if that's what you were, right?

Or talking about how different people's bodies are going to be different and that's okay. I think starting that at a young age too is, you know, everyone's body might hold energy differently. Uh, you know, people's bodies change as they get older. I think that that's all important to talk about from a young age to make it easier once we do hit that phase where their body has changed.

Now they're feeling self-conscious. Uh, when they really shouldn't be because we should communicate that better to them. Um, I will say too, and don't think it's just girls, I think for a lot of boys and, you know, kids in general, some kids will put on a good bit of fat before they go through a growth spurt.

And oftentimes before that growth spurt in puberty hits, if they've put on a lot of fat, parent concern, even doctor's concern, the way that they communicate that, or even pointing it out when they might not need to, can really be detrimental to a kid's mental health. So I think allowing them to understand, oh, your body's going through some changes right now, that's okay.

And if there's something you can do nutritionally, don't make it about their body. Make it about as an athlete, maybe we need more protein in the morning. Or as an athlete, you know, having more antioxidants could maybe support your recovery. So let's talk about ways to get you to eat more vegetables, right?

Or as an athlete, you should be having more during school. When can we fit in a snack so that they don't feel like eating four dinners worth of dinner later on? And taking it away from the body and more into what are these changes we can make that just support your overall energy and recovery.

[00:25:05] **Ginger Hultin:** It's such a balanced way to look at it.

And as you're talking about this, I'm just thinking about how I talk to all my folks that are going through perimenopause and menopause. Same thing. Your body's changing hugely. Your fat mass is changing. How can we look at this and acknowledge the change, but also just like have you feel good and fuel correctly.

[00:25:25] **Kelly Jones:** Exactly. I think across the lifespan, that communication, we're making strides, but it needs to be amped up a little bit.

[00:25:32] **Ginger Hultin:** Student athletes are at a higher risk of disordered eating. You've talked a little bit about why, but what's your experience with, with that?

[00:25:42] **Kelly Jones:** In terms of, and I'll talk a little bit about why too, you know, it's, they're in a higher pressure situation than kids who aren't student athletes, right?

And you can even look though too, I, I think people think of sports as, you know, our classic sports. There's also athletes in the arts where their risk is very high. Think about things like ballet, even think about musicians, that perfection is what they're aiming for. So it's not only the pressures that surround it and wanting to impress parents and teammates and coaches on top of yourself, But it's also, I think, some of the athletes and people and athletes in the arts that wind up going down this path and being a little bit more competitive just have those more perfectionistic personalities, right?

And that alone can be a risk factor for disordered eating and eating disorders. So you combine the perfectionism with that added pressure and the changes your body's going through and it really just can exacerbate what, you you know, the

possibilities are for eating disorders. I think we have to acknowledge there are genetic risks and that can come, that can relate a little bit to personality traits.

So, you know, it's not that someone's going to get an eating disorder specifically because of what someone said, but all of these triggers of their environment and the way food is discussed play a role in those that are already at a higher risk. I am not an eating disorder specialist. So if someone is Dealing with reds, what we call relative energy deficiency in sport, where their calorie needs are not matching their needs to support performance as well as their body's just basic needs for health.

Um, that's usually an area where we can step in. A lot of times it's inadvertent. Disordered eating is something we absolutely can talk through and, you know, have exercises to talk about relationship with food and body. But if someone is at the level of clinical eating disorder, we absolutely want them working with an eating disorder specialist as well as a psychologist who is specializing in eating disorders too.

We even have some clients who are more on the disordered eating spectrum that we have to give an ultimatum eventually and say if you're not going to regularly be regularly be working with a therapist then we cannot continue to support you just because a lot of times they build so much trust with us that they think we can fix everything and talk through all this stuff and there are other specialists that have to be involved too.

[00:28:05] **Ginger Hultin:** How can parents realize this might be happening and step in as soon as possible? Like, how can you have intentionality around it?

[00:28:13] **Kelly Jones:** Yeah. So for biological girls, one huge red flag is not having no period. If they're at needs where they should have had it, they don't yet. There's a very good chance that they are under fueled and they are not able to produce hormones appropriately to support normal reproductive functions at that age.

Or if you have a girl who has had their period but it's been very inconsistent, they're only getting it every three months or they were having it and now they don't anymore, very strong indicator of relative energy deficiency and that they need to probably reduce their activity level and really drastically increase their calorie intake.

With boys, I will say a lot of people just think, Oh, they're boys. They're growing so much. Their energy needs are so high and they need to gain weight. There's a lot of boys that run into disordered eating and eating disorders too. And I have one dietician who's been working with a young boy for a while now.

Wrestling is his sport, which when you're dealing with making weight and things like that, he wants to be an elite wrestler. He was restricting and it seemed to his parents like he was just really trying to optimize his performance and Now we're down the path where after some weight gain and then weight loss again, we're really seeing some red flags between my, uh, consultant dietician and his therapist that he's probably more clinical of bleeding disorder and, you know, kind of progressed over time, even as he was learning more about nutrition and the right ways to fuel his body.

So I think that we need to keep our ears open, have our eyes open for any, If someone's being really meticulous with their diet at the age of 12 or 13, um, and they're underweight already, those are big red flags and we make, want to make sure that we're evaluating what's going on there.

[00:29:56] **Ginger Hultin:** Yeah, I'm glad we covered that.

It's so important and I really want people to be able to identify it and get help right away.

[00:30:03] **Kelly Jones:** Yeah. And I will say too, getting injured a lot, being sick all the time, drastic mood swings and anxiety and depression, all risk factors that can be confusing at that age, but can really be grouped in with under feeling.

[00:30:16] **Ginger Hultin:** Hmm. That's a really great point. Absolutely. Well, I wanted to hear a little bit more about hydration because that's such an important part of this topic. How much fluid does the average person need?

[00:30:28] **Kelly Jones:** You may have heard this before, I'm sure that you've heard this before, but half your weight in water, if you take your weight in pounds, half of that, that's your baseline.

Athletes need much more than that, right? Because of how much they're losing. And I think that we need to look past just the skin sweat losses and think about respiratory losses, too. That's often forgotten that we're losing a lot of fluid through our breath. So especially for those more endurance based sports, that's that can really add up over the course of a few hours, the course of a week.

And with the skin sweat losses, if you're in a more dry environment, You might not notice the sweat on your skin quite as much because it's evaporating a little bit more easily. So just because it's not soaking your clothes or dripping off of you, doesn't mean that you are losing a lot of fluid too.

There's a lot of genetic differences in terms of how much fluid you can lose and even how much sodium you can lose in your sweat. So you can see anywhere between, you know, two a half a liter to a liter and a half of sweat per hour, even above one and a half liters if people are doing endurance activities in hot environments.

And that's pretty significant. We're looking at like 50 ounces plus in that case.

[00:31:34] **Ginger Hultin:** Yeah, a liter and a half in an hour is so much. Wow. Wow. That sounds really hard to rehydrate, but also make sure that you're replacing the right electrolytes too.

[00:31:46] **Kelly Jones:** There's a lot of hype around all different electrolytes right now, and they are important, right?

We do need to focus more on things like potassium and magnesium and zinc, however. When it comes to sweat losses, unless you're doing ultra endurance activities, sodium really is the thing we need to be replacing to maintain a healthy fluid balance. And, uh, what we'll do a lot of times too, because sweat losses can be so high, is think a little bit more about pre hydration and ensuring that sodium and carbohydrate intake is adequate enough that we're not losing excess fluid.

So if we're under fueled with carbs, If we don't have enough sodium in our diet, you're going to pee out or sweat out our fluid a little bit more easily because we're not holding on to it. For every gram of that glycogen, that carbohydrate that we store in our muscles, we're holding on to close to three milliliters of water.

So if we're carb deprived, we're not going to go into workouts quite as well hydrated either. And when it comes to sodium, uh, just having more sodium before a workout can stimulate thirst a little bit more, allow you to drink a little bit more. Maintain that fluid where it needs to be so that you're more supported during exercise and don't have to focus as much on drinking during your workout and catching up afterwards.

[00:32:58] **Ginger Hultin:** I was watching one of your reels, and you were at Costco, and you were like looking at an electrolyte replacement, and you were like, this has 10 milligrams of sodium, like it had hardly anything in it. So you really need to know what you need, how your hydration's affected, how many liters of water you're losing, and just like have a plan and using the right replacement.

[00:33:19] **Kelly Jones:** I would say that for an athlete, or those that are exercising an hour or longer, I'd recommend probably about 300 milligrams of sodium ish in an hour, um, for, you know, for electrolytes to be added to your fluid until you're exercising over 90 minutes. Or if you're doing two a days, I don't think that you need to add the carbs in, but the sodium I think is really helpful in our fluid balance.

And you could lose anywhere though. Like I've had athletes that have done sweat tests and they're losing like 2000 milligrams per liter of sweat. That's extreme, right? So for some people, needs are very high. And that's the people who, again, are tasting the salt on their lips, are feeling sandy, all of that.

Um, not everyone necessarily needs a sweat test, but there's really large variability in your sodium losses. And so working with someone can help you determine, okay, What's the right electrolyte replacement beverage for you? Or how much salt can you be adding to things throughout the day to get you where you need to be?

[00:34:14] **Ginger Hultin:** I have some older clients, maybe 70s or 80s, and their doctor told them that it was something along the lines of you don't absorb water if you don't use electrolyte replacement. And that just didn't sound right to me. Like, how do you approach that with the average person that's maybe not super active?

[00:34:31] **Kelly Jones:** Yeah. I mean, you're going to absorb water, right? Your body needs water. We are water. We thrive off of it. So it's going to be absorbed. If you are dehydrated or you are an athlete and we need to maximize fluid absorption, having our water come into the body with sodium and carbs is going to speed that up with our little transporters and our digestive tract.

So pairing the three together can be beneficial when you need it. But that doesn't mean that you won't absorb any fluid without the sodium and the carbohydrate. So you will, it's just you might retain a little bit more of the fluid when it's paired with carbs and sodium. And depending on your goals, you may or may not want to do that.

So if you have someone who is at risk of high blood pressure, isn't very active, and doesn't have a diet rich in whole foods, then We don't want to be adding in sodium because they're probably already getting it off and they're going to retain fluid just fine.

[00:35:21] **Ginger Hultin:** I do find in our culture that a lot of my clients have become very afraid of salt because there's this big message like salt is bad, be on a lower sodium diet.

And what I talk to people about is you need a certain amount of salt every day to live. And if you're losing some in your activities, then you need even more. So salt is not like a bad thing. Can you speak to that a little bit?

[00:35:45] **Kelly Jones:** I'm in total agreement with you. I think that it's been totally blown out of proportion, uh, you know, just because of fear of high blood pressure.

Even when we look at the data though, it's only about half people that actually respond to salt in terms of high blood pressure. So some people genetically, their kidneys are going to do a Better or worse job at regulating fluid balance regardless of your sodium intake. Again, you do need it. It has to be there for appropriate fluid balance or else you're going to have fluid in the wrong compartments in your body and that can result in negative effects too.

And we do see that with overhydration in athletes sometimes. Overhydrating is also a risk more common in women. So we can see sometimes amateur females that are maybe doing their first marathon and maybe they are afraid of salt and they're just pounding water and they're not getting in the electrolytes and that can actually lead to deadly situations in some cases.

So it's really important that we appreciate what salt is doing and that it's there for us for a reason.

[00:36:45] **Ginger Hultin:** Right. I'm glad that you brought up the condition, uh, hyponatremia is the official term. And you'll see that sometimes when people are like, how much water can you drink? And you can throw your electrolytes off by doing that.

So it just is a really important balance between water intake, your electrolytes, how much you're getting rid of through exercise every day. And I love also that you have brought up carbohydrate so many times because I didn't really realize how important carbohydrate intake was in the picture of hydration.

[00:37:16] **Kelly Jones:** Right. And when you think about it, if someone is dehydrated, you're going to give them an IV. What's in there, right? It's sodium and glucose. So it's. Similar when we think about fueling activity and I also want to give a shout out to, you know, people in the military, people who are working really strenuous jobs outside, construction, things like that.

That is a very physical job that has the same fluid and carbohydrate requirements that we're discussing right now for athletes. So we don't want to discount people that are in those outdoor physical jobs too.

[00:37:48] **Ginger Hultin:** Yeah. Oh, a hundred percent, especially when it's really hot out. Uh, Kelly, I'm so glad that we got to talk about hydration, but we also got to talk a lot about relationship to food and, and how to approach that with athletes.

So this was a fascinating conversation today.

Kelly Jones: It was great chatting with you.

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