



ADVICE TO RIDERS

LIQUIDS ON RACE DAY...WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Sports drink or Energy drink?

Before you consume anything, think about exactly what you are putting in your body.

The best form of drink before or after riding is always water. Sports drinks like Gatorade and Powerade may also be appropriately consumed. The ARB recommends against jockeys using so called “energy” drinks such as Red Bull and other similar products.

How Do Sports Drinks Compare with Energy Drinks?

Sports Drinks	Energy Drinks
Are designed to replace used/consumed energy.	Are designed for short term stimulus.
Contain well researched energy supplementation.	Contain known stimulants.
Are in a format that is simple for the body to digest.	Have potentially harmful effects such as: electrolyte disturbances; nausea and vomiting; and heart irregularities.
Have no risk of health side effects if consumed in appropriate quantities.	Contain approx. 113g CHO/ 100mls, higher than sports dieticians recommend for sports drinks.
Contain approx. 4-8g CHO/ 100mls, which the body burns to create energy.	Absorption into the body may be delayed.
Replenishes electrolytes which maintain salt and potassium balances in the body.	Do not contain electrolytes.
Helps rehydrate the body.	Manufacturers advise drinking similar amounts of water when exercising and consuming energy drinks thereby diluting the CHO contents to approx. 5.6g CHO/100mls.

What about the Taurine and Caffeine?

- Energy drinks may also contain taurine which is already in our bodies, and is also found in the meat we eat.
- There is conflicting evidence and opinions on whether taurine actually has energy boosting properties and whether there are any side effects.
- There are some reports of constipation or diarrhea linked to taurine. Taurine may also interact with other drugs recommended by your doctor.
- Caffeine in small doses has been shown to improve alertness, concentration, reaction times and endurance in sports, lasting longer than an hour.
- If a jockey is used to drinking tea or coffee then caffeine taken in small doses should not cause untoward side effects. However, for those who are unused to drinking tea or coffee, unwanted side effects such as anxiety, tremor, insomnia, and nervousness can occur.

So what should you drink on Race Day?

- The best form of liquid to consume while exercising is always water.
- Sports drinks may also be appropriately consumed.
- If you want, or feel the need for caffeine, it is preferable that you have coffee rather than taking the caffeine in an energy drink.
- Sip a sports drink to keep your sugar levels up.
- Remember that caffeine when consumed in excess can have some potentially serious side effects.
- When in doubt ask a sports Dietician.

References:

- www.druginfo.adf.org.au - Energy Drinks facts sheet November 2003
- www.cbc.ca - CBC News Article 6th February 2005
- www.hc-sc.gc.ca - Health Canada Article

Useful Links for Further Information:

- www.sportsdietitians.com.au



Dr. Caron Jander
National Chief Medical Officer
Australian Racing Board

Office: +61 2 9551 7700
Fax: +61 2 9551 7708
Email: cjander@australianracingboard.com.au