The Importance of *Fluid* in Sports

Inadequate fluid intake, along with hot and humid climates increases the risk for dehydration, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke in young athletes.

Dehydration limits athletic performance and can lead to heat stroke, organ damage and possible death. Children are at greater risk for dehydration and heat illness than adults because they are more likely to become overheated from strenuous activity.

Symptoms of heat illness are:
- Weakness
- Chills
- Goosebumps on the chest and upper arm
- Nausea
- Headache
- Faintness
- Disorientation
- Muscle Cramping
- Reduced or cessation of sweating

Children should drink cool water before, during and after physical activity. Cool water helps to cool the body and minimize the effects of stomach cramping. Sports drinks are not usually necessary because nutrients lost during activity can be replenished by a well-balanced diet after activity.