Hydration Patterns in Division I Football Players in Pre-Season Training Camp

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Proper hydration during vigorous intense exercise is important to maintaining optimal performance. Without proper hydration, the body cannot cool off heated muscles in a hot and humid environment. This study attempts to discover if the Valparaiso University football team is properly hydrated during pre-season training in a hot and humid environment. Participants included 102 football players who participated in 16 total practices. Data consisted of pre- and post-weigh-ins for each athlete for every practice. Sixty-five of the athletes completed questionnaires, which were created to discover the athletes' knowledge of hydration. Results indicated that a significant amount of players were dehydrated enough to impact performance. A frequency distribution was used to analyze the percentage of weight loss by each participant for every practice. A frequency distribution was used to analyze the questionnaire. The major findings from the questionnaire indicated that 67 percent of the participants did not think that they hydrated enough and that the coaches did not allow enough time to hydrate. The results of the study suggest two things: (1) That 84 percent of the football players experience fluid loss of at least 1 percent of their body weight, and (2) that 67 percent of Division I football players should be hydrating more.

Information about the Author:
Noah Neuenfeldt became interested in exercise physiology at an early age. He was heavily involved in athletics in high school and continued that involvement in college. He is particularly interested in the body's adaptations to exercise, both acutely and chronically. Noah will be pursuing a master's degree in exercise physiology in the fall of 2014 and plans on becoming a certified strength and conditioning specialist at the end of May.

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