

## PRESS RELEASE



### Running water! Proper hydration leads to improved performance and avoidance of problems requiring medical attention.

(Winnipeg, Manitoba, June 16, 2009) The Sport Medicine and Science Council of Manitoba will be launching the **H<sub>2</sub>O Safe Campaign** on Tuesday, June 16 at 1 pm, in the week leading into the Manitoba Marathon to aid in reducing problems associated with water use during longer duration exercise (especially running).

With many endurance races to come this summer, and with over **5200 runners** competing in the *half and full Manitoba marathon events*, over 1700 runners will suffer from reduced performance (slower running speeds or failing to complete the event) from “over or under” hydration. Further, between 2% and 8% of runners will visit the medical support staff at marathons, and about 35 to 132 runners will visit due to medical problems related to fluid intake. The vast majority of problems are not serious, and rarely lead to serious medical conditions. The two problems are **dehydration (under-hydration) and hyponatremia (over-hydration)**. These problems are largely avoidable through education on;

1. Proper hydration
2. Salt intake
3. Changing race strategy based upon the weather (hot and humid)

#### UNDER HYDRATION

**Dehydration** is a leading cause of reduced performance in runners. An average marathon runner may sweat 2.6 Litres! And needs to replace most of the fluid. Runners sweat more on hot days than on colder days. Runners sweat more if they run faster than slower. Runners average sweat rate is about 0.6 litres per hour (ranging between 0.4 litres every hour to over 1.8 litres per hour!). So for the average marathon runner with a time of 4 hours 15 minutes to compete – this would mean a sweat loss of 2.55 litres (2.55 kg or 5.61 lbs of water!). So without drinking appropriately, runners could lose this amount of weight. For a 70 kg person, this would mean a 3.6% dehydration – resulting in performance losses up to 40% (as little as 10%). Dehydration contributes to other conditions like heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

#### OVER HYDRATION

**Hyponatremia** is not uncommon in runners during marathons, and is called **Exercise induced hyponatremia (EIH)**. Runners that take in too much water before or during the event are at risk. Too much water dilutes the salt concentration in your body. This can hamper many functions of the runner. About 13% of runners (>670 at the Manitoba Marathon) will have **Exercise induced hyponatremia** at the end of the race due to “over hydration” and/or lack of salt intake and suffer only minor problems resulting in poor performance. Only 0.6% of these will experience race stopping problems or problems that require medical attention. Over hydration is most commonly found in slower runners, especially women.

#### SIMPLE HYDRATION RULES CAN AVOID DEHYDRATION AND HYPONATREMIA.

**Media are invited to attend a press conference. At the press conference, table displays will include; visuals of the salt and water requirements for the average marathon runner – before, during and after the race, and basic hydration strategies along with a marathon race map with water stations. Jorie Janzen (Sport Dietician) and Dr. Dean Kriellaars (Sport Medicine and Science Council of Manitoba) will be presenting the information and available for interview. This media event will take place on Tuesday, June 16 at 1 pm in Room 227 at Sport Manitoba, 200 Main Street.**

**Press Conference Kit** – media will be presented with a conference kit complete with 1. facts about proper hydration, 2. facts about hydration related problems in runners, 3. a urine color test kit, 4. a humidex chart, 5. a marathon race map with fluid stations, 6. an example hydration plan for a typical marathon runner.

#### **For further information, please contact:**

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### **Fast Facts**

- Over 1500 runners will suffer from decreased performance due to poor hydration.
- Exercise induced Hyponatremia will be experienced by over 550 runners (of 4500).
- Dehydration will be experienced by 1000 runners (of 4500). The hotter the day the greater the numbers.
- Simple education can avoid the reduced performance and problems that comes with improper hydration.
- There are some serious conditions that can arise from poor hydration. These are very rare and can be avoided.

*Source: Sport Medicine and Science Council of Manitoba*