

HYDRATION

Hydrate the horse – and yourself



Hydration is essential for horses to properly recover after a ride. During exercise they lose significant amounts of fluid through sweating, so replacing that loss is key.

DRINKING WATER

- Take 20L containers of water with you and fill buckets beside your trailer before you ride.
- Keep buckets out of direct sunlight to help the water stay cool.
- On hot days, add ice packs to keep temperatures down.
- Some riders use soaked sugar beet or rehydration products (e.g. various different rands mashes) to encourage drinking.
- A splash of apple juice can also make water more appealing.

- Allow horses to drink out on course at checkpoints – from streams or even puddles (as long as they're not too filthy!)

ELECTROLYTES

Fancy electrolyte mixes aren't always necessary. Horses mainly lose: Sodium, Potassium & Chloride with smaller amounts of calcium, magnesium and zinc.

If your horse is sweating heavily, sodium and potassium may need topping up.

A simple mix can help:

- 3 parts Sodium Chloride (table salt) to 1 part Potassium Chloride (low salt)
- Feed at a total rate of 1-4 tablespoons per day, depending on how much your horse is sweating.

Most horses actually need additional salt in their diet – salt licks alone are rarely enough – so it's worth reviewing your feeding plan.

DON'T FORGET ABOUT YOUR HYDRATION

We often forget to look after ourselves – most of our focus is on our horses.

- Try to carry water with you on course, or ask your crew to have it ready at checkpoints.
- Adding electrolytes to your own water can really help on hot days.
- Gel sachets are handy to keep in your bum bag for a quick boost.
- Make sure you stay hydrated, especially if you're driving home afterwards.

Hydration isn't just about performance – it's about safety and welfare for both horse and rider.