Better to drink warm rather than cold water? [1]

Dear Alice,

I am a soccer player who is extremely active and drinks lots of water. I am wondering, for my sake, whether it is better to drink cold water or warm water. While we all like cold water better, I was wondering if because of the fact that your stomach is a lot closer to body temperature than the temperature of most tap water, that it would be better to drink warm water. I thought this because it seemed like your stomach would be able to handle it a lot better. Thank you for your time.

? J

Answer

Dear J,

Staying well-hydrated is extremely important for an active athlete. It's great that you want to make staying hydrated as easy and healthy for your body as possible. In this case though, you're in luck ? health and preference coincide!

In a happy coincidence of what feels good and what's good for you, it's actually cold water that's recommended when exercising vigorously. During intense physical activity, the body's core temperature rises above the normal 98.6°F (37°C). Drinking cool water lowers the body's temperature and helps it settle back to its normal range. Studies have also shown that cold water 41°F (5°C) is absorbed more quickly from the stomach than warm, abating dehydration and allowing you to play harder and enjoy your game of soccer even more. Sweating also helps to lower the body's temperature, but through sweating we lose a lot of water, so it's important to keep drinking.

The body is smart and often craves what it needs. That doesn't mean you should have an ice cream sundae every time you get a hankering, but in this case, cold water is what you want and cold water is what your body uses best. That said, if the only water around is warm, or if some prefer it warm, that's ok too. The main point is ? listen to your body, stay hydrated, and have fun!

Alice!

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