



A SPARK TO THE SYSTEM

BY CONNOR GIVENS, MS, ATC



Just like a traditional athlete, industrial athletes heavily rely on their bodies to perform their job. Like any other athlete, the industrial athlete's performance and safety can boil down to one critical factor: hydration.

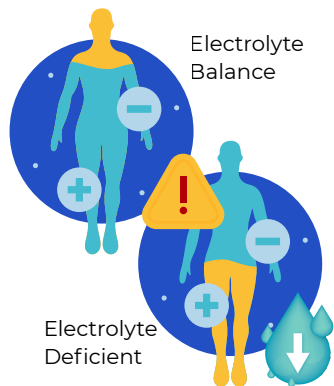
Over the past couple of weeks, we've talked about the power of hydration: why it matters and how to make it part of our daily routine. We all know by now, hydration is good! So this week, we're taking it one step further. It's time to look at a key part of the hydration recovery equation that often gets overlooked: electrolytes. They don't just make our water taste better; they help our bodies use that water to bounce back, replenish, and keep us performing at our best.

EVERYDAY ELECTROLYTES

Electrolytes are substances that conduct electricity when dissolved in water and are essential for bodily functions. Common electrolytes include sodium, magnesium, and potassium. They can be found in everyday food, such as bananas, salt, leafy greens, nuts, dairy, etc. While most people think of sports drinks as the go-to source for electrolytes, it's best to avoid options with high amounts of sugar. We're looking at you Gatorade, Powerade, and virtually any energy drink on the shelves.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Think about a typical day for an industrial worker. It's hot, the sound of machines running nonstop, and the amount of lifting, bending, and pushing never slows down. Over the duration of a shift, we can lose liters of fluid through sweat. And those fluids carry away essential electrolytes. These electrolytes are the body's conductors, helping muscles contract, nerves fire, and the heart keep rhythm.



When those fluids and electrolytes aren't replaced, the effects set in quickly. Fatigue creeps up. Focus slips. Muscles cramp and mistakes happen. In an environment filled with forklifts, heavy loads, and fast-moving operations, even a momentary lapse in concentration can result in injury.

KEEP YOUR ION THE PRIZE

The general recommendation for daily minimum water intake is for men to drink about 124 ounces and women about 92 ounces each day. While plain water is essential, it can't fully replenish what's lost during prolonged physical exertion. Sweat doesn't just deplete water; it drains electrolytes. Electrolyte-rich hydration options bridge that gap. By restoring both fluids and minerals, they keep the body's systems firing on all cylinders, preventing cramps, stabilizing energy levels, and improving reaction times.

For someone working in a fast paced environment with heavy machinery around, that means sharper decision-making and reduced risk of injury. And beyond the immediate boost, proper hydration aids recovery - muscles repair faster, energy rebounds more quickly, and the risk of long-term strain decreases. Over weeks and months, this can mean fewer sick days, higher productivity, and most importantly, healthier, safer workers.

Electrolytes, Unplugged

We've covered the essentials of staying hydrated and keeping your electrolytes in check, but there's even more to explore. Our [Electrolytes & Hydration infographic](#) breaks it all down at a glance: why electrolytes matter, how much of each you need, and where to find them in everyday foods. Check it out here!

Connor Givens, MS, ATC || Connor was born in New Jersey and grew up in Pennsylvania. He graduated with a Bachelor's of Science in Athletic Training from The University of Tampa and then went on to graduate from the University of South Carolina with a Master of Science in Advanced Athletic Training. In his free time, he enjoys golfing and spending time with friends and family.

Work Right is changing the way that companies view workplace hazards. Our focus is on educating the workforce to prevent injury. We provide access to Injury Prevention Specialists in the workplace to address the early signs of discomfort. We are changing the industry one company at a time by helping one person at a time.