

Stay Hydrated This Summer!

When the temperature rises, proper hydration is extra important.

You need to provide your body with the fluid that it needs in order to keep itself healthy. Water regulates many different body processes, including body temperature, digestion, and heart rate. It also cushions and protects our internal organs. When we don't get enough of it, our bodies can suffer.

We lose water from our bodies every time we breathe, sweat, or pee. In fact, it's estimated that you can lose up to 4 cups of water during an hour of exercise in the heat. This water loss can lead to dehydration.

Signs of dehydration include...

- Dark urine
- Dizziness
- Rapid breathing
- Rapid pulse
- Headache
- Cramping

Ultimately, dehydration can lead to extreme thirst, confusion, heat stroke, loss of consciousness, and death.

So, how can you manage staying hydrated in the heat of summer?

One of the keys is not to wait until you're thirsty. Drink water regularly.

Food can also provide some of the water you need every day. Things like watermelon, soup, milk, lettuce, and strawberries can help you get that needed hydration.

In general, sugar-sweetened sports drinks or beverages with added minerals, vitamins, or electrolytes are not



necessary unless you are a competitive athlete.

Tips for healthful hydration...

- Start your day with a big glass of water.
- Carry a water bottle with you. Refill it often.
- When selecting bottled beverages, look for drinks with fewer than 20 calories per 8 ounces.
- Ask for water in restaurants. It keeps you hydrated and it's free!
- Make infused water by adding slices of lemon, lime, oranges, or other fruit to your tap water. Combine it all in a big pitcher and store it in the refrigerator.
- Add a splash of juice to your water for a change of flavor.
- If you're going to exercise, make sure you drink water before, during, and after your workout.

*By Cheryle Jones Syracuse, MS,
Professor Emeritus at The Ohio State
University*