

Integrated Regional Falls Program



North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN

Fluids and the Importance of Hydration

The Importance of Water!

Water is very important; it makes up about 60% of the human body and every system in your body depends on water.

Water helps with:

- Maintaining normal blood pressure
- Eliminating body waste
- Carrying nutrients to cells
- Cushioning the joints and organs
- Aiding digestion
- Keeping the bowels regular
- Controlling your body temperature
- Lowering the risk of dehydration and heat stroke



What is dehydration?

Dehydration is a condition that occurs when you don't have enough water in your body to carry out normal functions. Even mild dehydration can drain your energy and make you tired.

Dehydration can lead to

- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Low blood pressure
- Increased incidence of **falls**
- Constipation
- Urinary tract infections



What are the Signs of Dehydration?

Mild to Moderate Dehydration:

- Thirst
- Dry lips and mouth
- Hot/flushed skin
- Decreased perspiration or tears
- Headache/dizziness/fainting
- Decreased urine output
- Dark yellow, strong smelling urine
- Constipation
- Sleepy or tiredness



Advancing or Severe Dehydration:

- Low blood pressure
- Shrivelled dry skin
- Rapid heart rate
- Rapid breathing
- Fever
- Difficulty walking
- Sunken eyes
- Cold hands and feet
- In the most severe cases, lethargy, confusion and loss of consciousness

How Much Fluid Should I Drink?

- 7-8 cups of fluids per day for women *and* 10-12 cups per day for men
- This includes water, milk, juices, soup and coffee/tea
- Limit coffee/tea/cafeinated beverages to 2-3 cups per day; these beverages act as diuretics in the body and increase water loss



Tips to Ensure Adequate Fluid Intake

- Keep a bottle or glass of water nearby
- Drink a glass of water when you wake up
- Have a glass of fluid with your meals and snacks
- Flavour your water with a slice of lemon or flavour crystals/drops
- Drink water before, during or after exercise
- If you are diabetic or overweight limit sweetened beverages; instead sugar-free juices, soft drinks or popsicles



Important Considerations

Drinking water is especially important when:

- When it is hot outside or in your home
- If you are exercising
- With certain medications
- When you have a fever, vomiting or diarrhea
- If your blood sugar is high
- If you are eating a lot of fibre



References

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