

HEALTHFUL TIPS

Summer Hydration



Don't wait until your thirsty! Use these tips to stay hydrated throughout the day.

Water is the most important nutrient. Your body can only survive a few short days without it. Your requirement for water depends on how much muscle tissue you have (muscle is 70-75% water while fat is 10-40% water), how active you are, how much your body sweats, your clothing, and how warm and humid your environment is.

Water works in your body to supply nutrients and remove waste, help blood circulate and maintain body temperature. You can't count on thirst to let you know that you need more water. By the time you feel thirsty you've already lost about 1% of your body's water and are beginning to become dehydrated.

After weight loss surgery, it is even more important to monitor fluid intake during summer months. It can be challenging to learn to sip water throughout the day rather than gulping a large glass all at once, and dehydration can occur quickly. Most people become more active after weight loss surgery too and may have a hard time gauging the amount of fluid they need.

Signs of mild to moderate dehydration in adults can include dry, sticky mouth, sleepiness or tiredness, thirst, decreased urine output, dry skin, headache, constipation, and dizziness or lightheadedness.

Symptoms of severe dehydration, a medical emergency, can include extreme thirst, irritability and confusion, very dry mouth, dry skin and mucous membranes, little or no urine (usually dark in color when dehydrated), sunken eyes, shriveled and dry skin that doesn't bounce back when pinched into a fold, low blood pressure, rapid heartbeat, rapid breathing, fever, delirium or unconsciousness.

The color of urine may be the best indicator of adequate fluid intake—lemonade color or lighter is best. Dark yellow or amber colored urine often signals dehydration.

TIPS TO STAY HYDRATED THIS SUMMER:

- Drink fluids throughout the day and evening.
- Limit alcohol.
- Eat fresh fruits and vegetables to boost fluid intake.
- Plan ahead and have a fluid source readily available at all times.
- Choose calorie-free fluids mostly.
- When temperatures rise, consider indoor exercise options, roller skating, ice skating, swimming, fitness centers, rock climbing studios.
- Wear lightweight, breathable clothing in light colors when exercising outdoors.
- Remember that hats and helmets trap heat and may cause your body to overheat quickly. Take breaks and remove periodically.
- Listen to your body – take breaks if you start to feel lightheaded, overheated or you get a headache. Don't ignore these warning signs.
- The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) recommends drinking:
 - 16 – 20 ounces of water two hours before moderate-intensity summer exercise
 - 8 – 12 ounces of water 10 – 15 minutes before going out in the heat
 - 3 – 8 ounces of water every 15 – 20 minutes during activity when active for less than 60 minutes
 - 3 – 8 ounces of a sports beverage every 15 – 20 minutes when exercising greater than 60 minutes
- Be aware that with most things—too much of a good thing isn't good – it is possible to over-hydrate.