

Staying Hydrated and Healthy This Summer

Summertime is here and brings along longer days, sunshine and warmer temperatures. While the season certainly doesn't have the fall risks associated with slick and icy winters, summer has dangers of its own. Dehydration is a concern during the summer months, and can cause complications for people of any age. However, dehydration holds extra danger for seniors over the age of 65.



Learn the concerns

In general, adults over the age of 65 have less water in their bodies than their younger counterparts. Pair this with decreased water intake, and dehydration comes quicker than you might expect. With seniors, dehydration can escalate quickly and lead to rapid pulse, unconsciousness, confusion or low blood pressure. Left untreated, dehydration can lead to death.

How it happens

Dehydration sounds easy enough to prevent – drink more water. However, it isn't always that simple, especially for seniors. Seniors sometimes are on medications that have a diuretic effect, which can cause the body to flush out extra water throughout the day. Also, we lose our ability to detect thirst as we age; this alone can lead to dehydration simply because the senior doesn't feel thirsty until they are already experiencing symptoms of dehydration.

Symptoms of dehydration

Simply being aware of the symptoms of dehydration can help you, and your older loved ones, stay healthy this summer. Watch for early signs of dehydration such as headaches, fatigue, cramping, feeling weak, or decreased urine output. If you notice these early symptoms, increase fluid intake.

Staying hydrated

Stay hydrated and healthy this summer by making sure you are drinking at least 8 glasses of water per day. If plain water isn't enough to make you excited to drink up, consider adding natural elements to your glass to add flavor. While adding tea, sugar, alcohol, or caffeine is not

helpful for your hydration, you can add wedges of citrus fruits like lime, lemon, or orange. You don't have to stop at citrus either – berries make a great addition to add a bit of sweetness to your beverage. Consider heading out to your herb garden and adding sprigs of mint or pineapple sage to add a refreshing kick as well.

If you find yourself still struggling to meet your water intake, you can eat your water with certain foods. Water-heavy foods include chunks of watermelon, grapes, lettuce, celery, and cucumber; try snacking on these foods throughout your day to keep your water content up.

Finally, make drinking a full glass of water a part of certain daily routines. For example, drink a full glass at all three meals, a full glass while watching your favorite morning program, a glass with each medication dosage, or a glass before your evening walk. Making your water a priority in your day will make it more difficult to miss out on important ounces.

Our caregivers at [Visiting Angels Wayzata](#) are here to help you with establishing that daily routine. If you are concerned about yourself or your loved one during the summer months, our caregivers are an extra set of eyes and an extra encouraging voice throughout these warm days. [Give us a call](#) to find out how we can meet your needs and provide some solutions for your concerns.

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