

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

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Beat the heat by staying hydrated this summer

Staying hydrated is important in the summer months and throughout the year. It's especially important for seniors 65 years and older.

Staying hydrated means you are drinking enough fluid to replace the fluid you lose (example, through sweat and urine) and to feel alert and well.

Drinking enough fluids helps with digestion, regulation of body temperature, and organ function. It can prevent dehydration, constipation, and urinary tract infections.

Signs of dehydration include:

- Headaches, confusion, dizziness, feeling light-headed, fatigue
- Thirst, dry mouth, difficulty swallowing
- Dry or fragile skin that breaks down easily
- Poor appetite and weight loss
- Constipation
- Passing small amounts of dark-coloured, strong-smelling urine

The amount of fluid you need to drink per day depends on your diet, health, body size, environment, and activity level. Most seniors need at least six cups (1.5 L), and up to 10 cups (2.5 L) of fluid each day.

Examples of fluids include water, tea, coffee, milk or fortified soy beverage, broth, 100 per cent vegetable or fruit juice, pop, and oral nutrition supplements such as Ensure or Boost.

Some foods, such as vegetables and fruits, soups, puddings, gelatin desserts, ice cream, sauces or gravies, smoothies and shakes have higher amounts of fluids.

Some ways to increase your fluid intake

- Sip on fluids throughout the day.
- Keep a pitcher of water in the fridge or on the table. This will remind you to drink water.
- Drink fluids at meals and between meals.
- Fill a water bottle and carry it with you.
- Include foods with higher fluid content such as vegetables and fruits.

- Take medications with a full glass of water. If you need extra calories, drink milk or oral nutrition supplements with your medications.