



## Hydration

### MU Patient Education Series

Drinking fluids is necessary to stay alive. The body is made up of mostly water. Therefore water is needed to maintain a balance in the body. Drinking fluids helps eliminate waste, controlling body temperature, blood pressure, metabolism, and heart rate. The question often asked is how much do we really need?

#### SYMPTOMS OF DEHYDRATION:

- Anxiety/Confusion
- Not being able to stay awake
- Faintness
- Inability to stand or walk
- Fast breathing
- Weak/fast pulse
- Dark urine
- Loss of consciousness
- Headaches
- Cramping
- Loss of appetite
- Dry cough
- Crying without tears
- Dry, sticky mouth
- Thirst
- Dry skin

#### HOW DOES MY BODY LOSE WATER?

- Sweat
- Exercise
- In your joints
- Urine
- Hot weather



- Fever
- Breathing
- Stool

### HOW MUCH SHOULD YOU DRINK?

There are different recommendations for water intake in a day. Most indicate that you should take 6-8 glasses of water a day. Some may need more others may need less.

- Drink enough so you go to the bathroom every 2-4 hours
- Urine should be light in color
- Athletes need more

### WHAT TO DO IF YOU DON'T LIKE WATER:

- Flavor crystals (sugar free)
- Lemon, cucumber, or fruit slices
- Honey
- Mint leaves
- Freeze it
- Vegetables

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SPORTS DRINKS?

- Usually flavored
- Have additional vitamins and minerals
- Replace some electrolytes (potassium and sodium)

### OTHER DRINKS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT:

- Alcohol and caffeinated beverages such as coffee, teas, and colas are not recommended because they pull fluids from the body and will increase dehydration
- Fruit juices and fruit drinks may have too many carbohydrates and sugars (these should be diluted with water)

\*Some people may be on a fluid restricted diet. This usually means a doctor has set limits to how much liquid a person can have in one day.

#### **DISCLAIMER:**

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