HEALTH TIP

The Water Way

9 tips for staying hydrated this summer—and beyond

As temperatures and humidity kick into high gear, sitting back and cooling down with a tall glass of lemonade is refreshing. But you’ll need to do more to keep dehydration at bay.

Heat illness can strike anyone any time of the year, but it’s especially pronounced during the summer months. Those at greatest risk include infants and young children, adults over 65, people with mental illness and people with physical illness, particularly heart disease or high blood pressure.

Be safe by staying in air-conditioned buildings when it’s hot outside, wearing light and loose-fitting clothing and by staying in the shade when you have to be outside during the day. Most importantly, keep hydrated. Men should drink at least 13 cups of water a day and women nine, according to the American Dietetic Association. The best gauge to tell if you’re getting enough water is to check the color of your urine. If it’s clear to light yellow, you’re probably drinking enough. If it’s any darker than that, you’re not.

HERE’S HOW TO GET YOUR MINIMUM:

1. **DRINK UP.** If you’re thirsty, your body is already dehydrated. Sip water throughout the day and never let your mouth get dry.

2. **AVOID ALCOHOL AND SUGARY BEVERAGES.** Both alcohol and sugar actually cause the body to lose liquid.

3. **COOL IT.** You may be inclined to reach for ice-cold drinks on a hot day, but go for cool instead. It’s less likely to give you a stomach cramp and easier for your body to absorb.

4. **SWEETEN THE DEAL—NATURALLY.** Instead of drinking sugary soda or juice drinks, opt for water or sparkling water that you flavor yourself with a bit of natural fruit juice.

5. **MINIMIZE THE CAFFEINE.** Instead of coffee or tea breaks, take water breaks.


7. **EAT UP.** Food contains water, too. Some fruits and vegetables with the highest percentages of water are: lettuce, watermelon, broccoli, grapefruit, carrots and apples.

8. **EXERCISE GOOD JUDGMENT.** Drink plenty of water before, during and after a workout.

9. **SET A TIMER.** Can’t seem to remember to sip? Set a timer to go off every 20 or 30 minutes and take a drink. Or, make a game of it. Take a drink every time there’s a commercial break, someone says your name or you shift in your chair—anything that happens often!

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