Dehydration is Bad. Water is Your Friend.

What is Dehydration?
- When the body has less water than it needs to function optimally.
- Occurs when the body’s output is greater than intake.
- A decrease of 2% or more can result in physical, visual, or cognitive changes.

What Does Your Body Use Water For?
* Body temperature regulation
* Digestion
* Metabolic processes
* Respiration
* Lubrication of joints
* Nutrient distribution

Facts You Should Know:
- Dehydration is the most common fluid and electrolyte disorder in all elderly adults populations.
- Water makes up about 50% of total body weight.
- Water must be replaced daily because the body cannot store it.
- Death rates are 7 times higher for dehydrated patients.
- Hospitalization costs for dehydrated patients are more than $1 Billion per year in the United States.
- Women are more prone to dehydration.
- Medications such as diuretics, laxatives, and sedatives can cause dehydration.
- Drinking alcohol or caffeine can contribute to dehydration.
**Signs of Dehydration:**

- **Mild Symptoms**
  - Dry, sticky mouth and tongue
  - Lightheaded or dizzy
  - Weakness and headache
  - Lethargy
- **Moderate Symptoms**
  - Confused or irritable
  - Stop sweating
  - Dark yellow urine
  - Decreased urine output
  - Blood pressure lower than usual
  - Increased heart rate
- **Severe Symptoms**
  - Fainting or unconsciousness
  - Disoriented
  - Onset of fever

**Consequences of Prolonged Dehydration:**

- Muscle spasm
- Kidney dysfunction
- Dangerous reactions to medications
- Infections
- Seizures
- Hospitalization
- Coma
- Death

**How Much Water Should You Drink Each Day?**

0.46 oz of water per pound of body weight

- To calculate: 0.46 x weight in lbs = recommended # of ounces per day
- For example: 120 lb person
  
  \[ 0.46 \times 120 \text{ lbs} = 55.2 \text{ oz of water} \]

**Easy Ways You Can Drink More Water:**

- Drink from a fun straw
- Carry a water bottle with you
- Add lemon, lime, orange or favorite fruit
- In winter, drink hot water with mint leaves or lemon and honey
- Set an alarm to remind you when to drink more fluids
- Have a glass of water before and after each meal

**References**


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