

DEHYDRATION

Fluid Replacement & Electrolytes



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DEHYDRATION is the loss of fluids and electrolytes, which are both needed for the kidneys, brain, heart, and other systems to function.

Signs of Dehydration:

Mild:

- ⇒ Thirst
- ⇒ Dry lips
- ⇒ Slightly dry mouth

Moderate:

- ⇒ Very dry mouth
- ⇒ Sunken eyes
- ⇒ Skin doesn't bounce back

Severe:

- ⇒ All signs of moderate dehydration
- ⇒ Rapid, weak pulse (more than 100 at rest)
- ⇒ Cold hands and feet
- ⇒ Rapid breathing
- ⇒ Blue lips
- ⇒ Confusion, lethargy, difficult to rouse.

Staying Hydrated:

Drink:

- ⇒ Every 15 minutes
- ⇒ At least 64 oz. per day, more on hot or humid days
- ⇒ 2 Cups before working
- ⇒ Water—or mostly water—Fluids without sugar, caffeine or alcohol hydrate best



Electrolytes:

- ⇒ Are minerals in your blood that carry an electrical charge & are necessary for important functions such as muscle contraction (think your heart), blood pressure control, and proper gland and nerve function.
- ⇒ Can help protect employees from heat stress.
- ⇒ Should be supplied immediately when heat stress is suspected

Note: Sports drinks can be high in calories and sugar, so don't overdo it! Stick to 1-2 servings per day, and use only when risk of dehydration is increased.

These can increase dehydration risk:

- ⇒ Fever
- ⇒ Hot/humid weather → increased sweating
- ⇒ Diabetes → increased urination
- ⇒ Certain medications, especially diuretics → Read rx information
- ⇒ Other chronic or short-term illness



Fluids and Electrolytes can be lost through sweat, urine, vomit and diarrhea. When working in the heat, it is important to monitor fluids and guard against dehydration.

Monitor your self:

- ⇒ Conduct physiological monitoring when available—blood pressure, heart rate, temperature
- ⇒ Urine should be light in color

Stay cool:

- ⇒ Take breaks
- ⇒ Wear loose, light clothing
- ⇒ Work in shade and use portable shading when possible
- ⇒ Use fans when possible

Monitor your co-workers.

- ⇒ Watch for signs of dehydration
- ⇒ Provide electrolytes (via sports drink or specific electrolyte replacement product) when severe signs of dehydration present.

Electrolyte Sources:

- ⇒ Sports drinks such as Gatorade®, Powerade®, etc.
- ⇒ Electrolyte replacement products such as Sqwinchers®, Sustain®, or others.
- ⇒ Keep diet high in fruits, vegetables, nuts, and legumes to assist in electrolyte balance.