



Health and Wellness Program



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## → WATER: IT DOES A BODY GOOD!

Summer means hotter temperatures and longer days. Many people spend more time outside during the summer months. With these changes, it is really important to make sure you stay hydrated. Drinking water during the day is the easiest way to do that.

Water helps the body function. Everybody needs it. It doesn't matter if someone is tall or short, or young or old. Water is so important that the human body can only live a few days without it. It helps control temperature, helps with digestion and eliminates waste from the body. Water also helps strengthen muscles and keeps joints, tissues and organs working well. Drinking water can keep your skin moist and looking younger too.

### Staying hydrated

The amount of water that a person needs depends on his or her lifestyle. As a general suggestion, most people should get eight to 12 cups of water a day. People who exercise or are very active need more than people who have a lower activity level.

You can also stay hydrated by drinking other beverages. You should try to limit other drinks because many have sugar and calories. Water is the best and healthiest choice. Some food also has water, such as fruits and vegetables. Those are good choices to add to your diet too.

You may become dehydrated if you do not drink enough. You will know you need to drink more water when you become thirsty. That is the first sign that you need more fluids. You can also look at your urine. If you are getting enough then it will be light yellow or colorless.



Here are a few tips to keep hydrated during these summer months.

- Drink a cup of water when you first wake up.
- Drink water instead of soda or fruit juices.
- Keep a bottle of water with you to sip on during the day.
- Drink more water when exercising.
- Add more fruits and vegetables to your diet.



### SUN VERSUS SHADE: THE BURNING DEBATE

Did you know that your skin is the largest organ in the body? Its main job is to protect your insides. Many years ago people thought that a tan during the summer was a plus. Now we know that a tan is actually our skin trying to protect us from the sun.

The sun has ultraviolet radiation that can damage your skin and lead to cancer. There were more than 1 million new cases of skin cancer diagnosed last year (source: the National Cancer Institute). Too much sun can also lead to early wrinkles, sagging and skin that looks leathery. Do not risk damaging your skin when there are easy ways to protect it.

Wear sunscreen every day, even when it is cloudy. About 70-80% of the sun's rays can come through clouds and fog. You should put on sunscreen a half hour before you go outside and then reapply every couple of hours. If you are going to be swimming or sweating, then you may need to reapply more often. Once you get a sunburn, you have already damaged your skin.

Also, don't forget your face. Facial skin is more sensitive to the sun because it is thin. Many cosmetic products now include SPF, so be sure to check the labels when comparing new products.

#### For better skin care, do

- Stay out of the sun, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Always wear sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher. Apply to your whole body 30 minutes before you go outside. Then reapply every two hours.
- Wear clothing to protect your skin and eyes from the sun. A hat with a wide-brim, UV sunglasses, long-sleeved shirts and pants are good choices.
- Watch your skin to see if there are any changes like new moles or freckles.
- See your health care home provider (provider) every year for a professional skin exam.

#### Do not

- Lay in the sun to get a tan.
- Use a tanning booth to get a tan.
- Let yourself get a sunburn.

### SUMMERTIME FUN

Summertime can mean an increase in outdoor activities and therefore an increase in asthma symptoms. You can enjoy the summer days without sacrificing fun with a few reminders.

#### Be aware of the air around you

- Avoid heavy exercise during hot, humid weather.
- Watch pollen counts and ozone alerts.
- Breathe cleaner air by using the air conditioning when you are at home or in your car.
- Stay away from cigarette smoke.

#### Avoid tracking in pollen into the house

- Leave jackets and shoes by the door.
- Wash clothes in hot water if you have spent a lot of time outside.
- Take a shower and wash your hair before bed.

#### Get ready for camping

- Air out tents.
- Wash sleeping bags.
- Sit far away from campfires.

Wherever you go and whatever you do this summer, be sure to take your medications as prescribed by your provider.

#### Sources

Water resources: links found on the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agriculture Library Food and Nutrition Information Center: [extension.iastate.edu/nutrition/sport/fluids.html](http://extension.iastate.edu/nutrition/sport/fluids.html) [mclcmson.edu/extension/hgic/food/pdf/hgic4151.pdf](http://mclcmson.edu/extension/hgic/food/pdf/hgic4151.pdf)

Sun versus shade: [skincancer.org/sunscreen](http://skincancer.org/sunscreen) [healthunit.org/sunsafety/aboutskin.htm](http://healthunit.org/sunsafety/aboutskin.htm)

Asthma triggers: [sunjournal.com](http://sunjournal.com)

Carbohydrates: [kidshealth.org/kid/stay\\_healthy/food/carb.html](http://kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/carb.html) [diabetes.org/food-nutrition-lifestyle/nutrition/meal-planning/carbs-and-diabetes.jsp](http://diabetes.org/food-nutrition-lifestyle/nutrition/meal-planning/carbs-and-diabetes.jsp)

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