

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hydration is Key!

Water is crucial for our bodies to function in a healthy manner. When temperatures reach into the upper nineties and above one hundred degrees there are key actions, we can take to help keep ourselves and our families hydrated.

Start hydrating early. If you are working outside, you should hydrate before you even go outside. Once our bodies feel thirsty, we are starting to become dehydrated.

As temperatures rise, we may not be aware of the effects the heat is having on our bodies. Sweating will naturally occur when we are working in the heat. When we start to sweat profusely, become dizzy or uncomfortable or get heat cramps where muscles start cramping up you may well be on your way to severe heat stress. When you stop sweating in the heat your body is overloaded and you need to seek medical attention.

The Centers for Disease Prevention recommend drinking one cup, eight ounces of water every 15-20 minutes when working in the heat. Drinking more than forty-eight ounces in an hour could cause a medical emergency because the concentration of salt in the blood becomes too low. Drinking lesser amounts of water more frequently each hour rather than a large amount once an hour is more effective in preventing dehydration. Continuing to hydrate after work and into the evening is key to staying hydrated. Dehydration can cause increases for the risk of kidney stones when it becomes chronic.

Avoid energy drinks with high levels of caffeine, sugary drinks, and alcohol. The amount of caffeine in regular tea, coffee and soft drinks will not influence hydration. When you eat a well-balanced meal regularly during elevated temperatures you should be able to maintain water and electrolyte balances.

Prolonged sweating for several hours would be cause for consuming a sports drink with balanced electrolytes. The CDC does not recommend taking salt tablets but eating a normal meal and snacks throughout the day.

During the heat of summer take frequent hydration breaks to assure you are drinking enough water to keep your body functioning at an elevated level of efficiency. Try to take frequent breaks, get out of direct sunlight, and check in with other family members or workers often.

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Resources: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/UserFiles/works/pdfs/2017-126.pdf>

2012, *Liquid assets: The Value of Fluids to Your Health*, Barbara Ames FCS Agent

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