

SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Importance of Water



Water is vital to life! It accounts for 50% of an older adult's body weight. You need water to maintain body temperature, to carry nutrients and oxygen to body cells, and to remove wastes. Water also helps to cushion your joints and protect body organs and tissues.

Without enough water you can become dehydrated. Dehydration can occur also from some health conditions and medications. **Dehydration** causes dry mouth, constipation, mental confusion, and increased body temperature. An easy way to tell if you are getting enough water is to check the color of your urine. At least once a day, your urine should be pale yellow. Dark yellow urine is too concentrated and means that you need more fluids.

Warm weather increases your need for water. Loss of fluid in hot weather may not increase your thirst. As people grow older, the thirst mechanism does not function as well. You may need to drink water and other fluids even when you aren't thirsty to prevent becoming dehydrated.

Water Tips



Try to have about **6 to 8 cups of water** a day. Plain water is not the only way. Almost any nonalcoholic fluid will do - seltzer, low fat milk, tea and coffee, soups and juices. Add water to juices to dilute them and reduce the sugar.



Fruits and vegetables contribute significant amounts of water to your daily intake because these foods have a high water content. Strive for **7 servings of fruits and vegetables every day.**

