



WHY IS HYDRATION IMPORTANT?

Water is essential and makes up to 60% of a person's weight. By drinking sufficient amounts of water you can ensure proper bodily function and reduce the risk of developing various complications and conditions. One way your body maintains homeostasis is by retaining or excreting water throughout the day. An example would be reabsorbing water in the kidneys and urinating or sweating. Water plays a critical role in ensuring the proper function of all body systems. Everyone is prone to dehydration, but older adults are at greater risk due to hunger and thirst cues decreasing with age.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF DEHYDRATION

Dehydration may increase one's risk for complications such as urinary tract infection, pneumonia, and inhibit wound and pressure ulcer healing just to name a few. Additionally, dehydration can also present itself in cognitive symptoms like confusion and disorientation. Signs and symptoms can include and are not limited to upper body weakness, fatigue, headache, apathy, nausea, speech difficulty, confusion, sunken eyes, as well as dry nose, mouth, and tongue.

TIPS FOR STAYING HYDRATED

- Fluids needs vary, but an easy way to remain hydrated is to follow the 8 x8 rule. Drink eight 8-oz glasses or 64 ounces of water a day is generally recommended to prevent dehydration.
- Sometimes it may be difficult to monitor your hydration status, but the urine color check is an easy way to see if you are drinking enough water throughout the day. A pale yellow tone is ideal.
- Portable, refillable water bottles are helpful and can be labeled with the goal times that you are aiming for.
- Opt for water and unsweetened beverages instead of sodas or pop. Adding flavor enhancers or fruits and veggies such as fresh citrus, cucumber slices, or basil leaves are just a few ways to add variety to your water intake.

