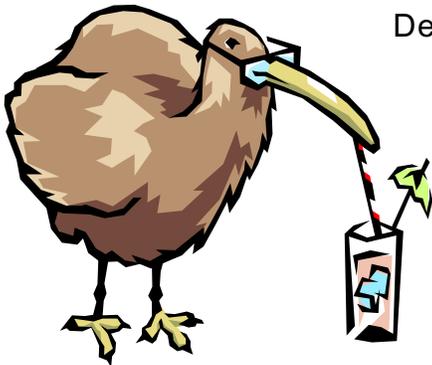


# BEAT THE HEAT ... STAY HYDRATED!

Our bodies are about two thirds water ... including 80% of blood, 73% of lean muscle (including brain tissue) and 22% of bones!

Dehydration occurs when a person loses more fluids than he or she takes in and the total amount of water in their body has dropped below the level needed for normal function. Common causes include gastrointestinal illness (vomiting and diarrhea), fever, excessive sweating (from exercise or the heat) and dieting by using laxatives or diuretics.

Small decreases don't cause problems, and in most cases, may go completely unnoticed. But losing larger amounts of water can sometimes make a person feel sick - check with your health care provider if you or your child feels dizzy or lightheaded, or seems confused, lethargic or exceptionally tired.



Dehydration can happen quickly, well before you feel thirsty. Drinking lots of fluids is usually a sufficient remedy:

- Drink plenty of liquids including water, diluted juice, flavored seltzer, herb tea, lemonade, a sports drink like *Gatorade* or infant's *Pedialyte* each day. Make it a habit to keep an insulated travel mug or sports bottle with you throughout the day to sip a cool beverage.
- Drink extra water before, during and after exercise.
- Include high water-content fruits and vegetables like apples or oranges, watermelon, peaches, tomatoes, cucumber or zucchini, and lettuce as a part of every meal or as a refreshing snack.
- If it's too hot to eat a heavy meal, try a liquid lunch like *Carnation Instant Breakfast* made with low fat milk. Enjoy a cold summer soup like tomato-based gazpacho or a berry or melon-based soup, with crusty whole grain bread for a light dinner.
- Choose high water content treats like ice pops or sorbet, jello, or custard as a snack and dessert.
- **DO NOT** take salt tablets without first checking with your doctor. The increased concentration of salt actually keeps fluids in the stomach longer, which leaves less fluid available for necessary sweat production.

**WARNING: HEAT EXHAUSTION** is a mild form of shock from too much exposure to heat. Dehydration is usually the cause: while body temperature remains close to normal, look for extreme thirst, pale clammy skin with profuse sweating, headache, dizziness, fatigue and sometimes abdominal cramping or nausea. Move to a cool shady spot or get indoors to an air conditioned room, and offer lots of fluids.



**WEST WINDSOR HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

serving the Communities of West Windsor ■ Hightstown ■ Robbinsville