

“How can I make sure I don’t get dehydrated?”

The general rule is to drink eight 8-ounce glasses of fluid each day.



Dehydration means that your body needs water.

Dehydration is usually described as losing an amount of water greater than one percent of your body weight. For a 150-pound person, that’s one and a half pounds. You may feel lightheaded, dizzy and nauseated. You could have a dry mouth, dry lips and an increased heart rate. You may notice decreased urination or darkening of the urine. In the extreme, dehydration can make you seriously ill.

If you think you’re dehydrated, particularly on a hot summer’s day, drink plenty of water and refrain from any strenuous activity until you feel better. If your child becomes dehydrated, you may want to use an oral electrolyte maintenance solution (such as Pedialyte®) which helps your child’s body take in and retain more liquid. If symptoms persist and your child doesn’t feel better, call your pediatrician.

Our bodies are constantly losing water.

Whether you’re gardening or relaxing in a chair, you will lose water through your skin and by breathing. You’ll also lose water through urination and bowel movements. To stay hydrated, you can drink water, milk and fruit juices—but water is best.

If you wait until you’re thirsty to have a drink, you’re already dehydrated. Taking a drink will quench your thirst, but your thirst stops before your body has all the water it needs. Plan on drinking water regularly, particularly if you know you’re going to be doing a lot of physical activity or if it’s hot.

You can drink too much water, but this is extremely rare.

Drinking too much water is called hyponatremia or water intoxication. Hyponatremia is most commonly seen in infants who are six months of age or younger, and in athletes. A baby can get it as a result of drinking several bottles of water a day or from drinking infant formula that has been diluted too much. Athletes can drink too much water when they’re trying to replenish water they have lost while training or competing.