

Hydration

Why keep hydrated?

Water is the second most common molecule in the Universe and the average human body is composed of about 55% water. It has been said that "The molecular structure of water is the essence of life" by Dr. Albert Szent-Györgi, Nobel Laureate.



What is water used for in the body?

- A nutrient for every cell
- A solvent for minerals, vitamins, amino acids, glucose and lots more
- A reactant in the body's biochemical system
- A lubricant around the joints
- A carrier that distributes nutrients and other elements throughout the body
- A shock absorber that protects vital organs, such as the brain, spinal cord or interior of the eyes, as well as the fetus during pregnancy
- A thermo-regulator that helps maintain body temperature and ensure cooling when needed

The impacts of dehydration

Performance

Our ability to concentrate and carry out simple tasks can be affected by mild dehydration. For example, a 2% loss of water results in the following reductions in performance:

- Concentration 20%
- Motor speed 15%
- Arithmetic ability 10%
- Short term memory 13%
- Efficiency 18%

Health

If we have over 2% in water loss our quality of life can be affected:

- Wound healing
- Constipation
- Headaches and migraines
- Heartburn
- Good oral health
- Insomnia
- Sexual performance/libido

Aging

Kidney efficiency declines with age, as does thirst perception and may be particularly severe where there is a history of strokes or cognitive impairment. So it is important to ensure good hydration in the elderly.