

# Hydration in Extreme Heat

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## Why is drinking enough fluid so important in hot weather?

In extreme heat, the body loses water through sweat. If the body continues to lose water and it is not replaced, then a person can become dehydrated. Dehydration can lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke, which are dangerous health conditions

## How does someone know if they are drinking enough fluid?

The easiest way to tell if you are drinking enough fluid is to check the color and amount of your urine. If it is dark and has a strong odour, it is concentrated with wastes. Also, if you are urinating less often, then your body may be lacking in water. If it is pale in color and has no strong odour, the body probably has a normal water balance. Also, you need to be aware of how you feel and if you are becoming dehydrated

## What are some signs of dehydration?

Thirst is often one of the last signs of dehydration – you need to drink fluid before you become thirsty. Signs of dehydration include fatigue, headache, dizziness, nausea, dry lips & mouth, and low energy. Many people experience constant low-level dehydration and feel tired and have a headache most of the day. Not drinking enough fluid could be one cause of this.

## What is the best way to consume more fluid?

The best choices for replacing sweat losses and staying well hydrated include:

- Water, including carbonated water
- Milk
- 100% fruit juice
- Watery foods – watermelon, grapes, oranges, also other fruits and soups
- Watery “treats” such as freezies, jello, and popsicles; but these can be high in sugar
- Sport drinks – but these can be high in sugar and caffeine

## Are there drinks to avoid in extreme heat?

Alcoholic drinks, such as beer, can cause the body to lose fluid; it is tempting to drink a cold beer in the heat, but don't rely on alcohol to provide the body with fluid – make sure to drink water after each alcoholic drink. Caffeine is a diuretic and also causes the body to lose water. Coffee, tea, dark soft drinks, and some sports drinks can have high amounts of caffeine – make sure to drink water in between caffeine drinks as well.

No matter what age or stage of life, everyone is at risk of becoming dehydrated.

For free resources and more information on nutrition and hydration in the summer, call the Leeds, Grenville, and Lanark District Health Unit's Health Action Line at 1-800-660-5853 (613-345-5685)

and ask to speak with a Registered Dietitian. You can also visit our website at [www.healthunit.org](http://www.healthunit.org) or e-mail a Health Unit dietitian at [healthyeating@healthunit.org](mailto:healthyeating@healthunit.org).