

KEEP UP THE FLUIDS AS YOU AGE DON'T RISK DEHYDRATION

As we get older there is a higher risk we will be dehydrated and the consequences of this can be serious.

Each year, elderly people are hospitalised because of dehydration. Our body's ability to retain water is reduced as we age.

Alongside this, our sense of thirst becomes less acute. When we take multiple prescribed medications, our risk of dehydration is increased. Some long term conditions, like diabetes, also have an effect.

Another major cause of dehydration is vomiting and diarrhoea. When you're sick, drinking can sometimes be the last thing you feel like. However, if you don't keep your fluids up, you may end up even sicker.

On the positive side, there is an easy and simple remedy – drink water regularly throughout the day. It's on tap and it's free!

Talk to your GP or practice nurse if you have a heart condition or if you are on diuretics (water pills).

So what stops people keeping up their fluids? Incontinence problems, forgetfulness because of dementia, an inability to get up and get a drink easily, and a reduced sense of thirst may all contribute.

HOW TO CHECK YOUR HYDRATION LEVELS

A good indicator is the colour of your pee. If it is light-coloured or clear, you are well hydrated. Dark pee usually indicates dehydration.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?



Drink water regularly – don't wait until you get thirsty.



Keep a glass of water next to you, and always have water on the dinner table. Add a slice of lemon.



Eat water-content foods such as fruit, vegetables and soups.

SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION IN OLDER PEOPLE

- A dry mouth
- Headaches or dizziness
- An inability to pee
- Constipation
- Sleepiness
- Irritability
- A general feeling of being unwell
- Crying, but with few or no tears
- Confusion
- Difficulty walking
- Sunken eyes
- Rapid heart rate
- Low blood pressure
- Urinary tract infections
- Weakness
- Pneumonia.