

Dehydration Tips

Roughly 60-75% of the body is comprised of water. Dehydration is a condition that can occur when the loss of body fluids, mostly water, exceeds the amount that is taken in. Following surgery it can be a challenge for patients to meet their fluid requirements of 64 ounces a day. This may be because they are not hungry or thirsty and/ or getting in enough fluids is a behavioral adjustment since you are no longer guzzle fluids as you had before but instead you must sip every few minutes.

Due to these reasons, it is not uncommon to experience dehydration. The body needs about two to three ounces of water every hour while you're awake. Signs of dehydration include but are not limited to: dry mouth, thirst, decreased urine output, dry skin, headache, dizziness, fatigue, rapid heart rate, decrease in blood pressure and constipation.

Tips to prevent dehydration:

1. Assess your drinking style
 - a. Take small sips
 - b. Make sure there is always access to fluids – keep a water bottle around 24/7)
 - c. Consume your fluids evenly throughout the day
2. Experiment with Temperature/Type/Taste of fluids
 - i. Some patients do better with icy/slushy/cold temps while others prefer warm beverages
 - ii. Sometimes flavored water is better tolerated than plain water (due to plain water having a heavier solute load)
 - iii. Your choices should be zero or low calorie options
- b. Food sources that hydrate
 - i. Sugar-free jello, or sugar free popsicles
 - ii. Protein shakes do count as fluids
3. Monitoring your fluid
 - a. Monitor your urine color (goal is lighter urine as the day goes on)
 - b. Assess for dizziness/lightheadedness upon standing
 - c. If vomiting fluid – contact your surgeons office

Should you experience symptoms of dehydration contact your surgeon's office, as you may need IV fluid hydration if it goes on for any length of time.