

IPC Newsletter July 2025

Heat Health- Avoiding dehydration

Being hydrated has many benefits for a person's physical and mental health. As we get older, the desire to drink fluids naturally decreases making the elderly more vulnerable to dehydration, especially during hot weather. People with reduced mobility may find it more difficult to get a drink or worry about getting to the toilet in time.

Keeping track of hydration

- The recommended fluid intake is at least 1500 ml/ 6-8 mugs or glasses per day (unless fluid restricted).
- Identify residents who need help with fluid intake or getting to the toilet and ensure they have support.
- A fluid balance chart helps to monitor fluid intake.
- A urine colour chart (attached & link below) can indicate how well hydrated your residents are. (Please note, some medications, supplements and foods, can affect the colour of urine.)
- Monitor for dehydration - dry skin/lips/mouth, headaches, new confusion or drowsiness

Ways to increase hydration

- Can you increase the cup size to offer a larger drink?
- Ensure the cup used is suitable for the individual - is the handle large enough to use, is the cup light enough?
- Offer high fluid food such as jelly, ice cream, ice lolly, watermelon, smoothie.
- Incorporate hydration stations (except during outbreaks of infection) and provide the opportunity to drink at every meal time, medication round, mid-morning and afternoon.
- A 'Hydration champion' can increase awareness of hydration within the home.

Resources for staff and residents on hydration can be downloaded free:

www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/resources/preventing-dehydration-viral-gastroenteritis/
www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/resources/urine-colour-guide-poster-for-care-homes-and-domiciliary-care-uti/
www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/resources/guidance-on-uti-for-care-home-staff

To contact the Westmorland and Furness Health Protection Team,

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