

Why preventing dehydration is key?

if you or someone you care for has confirmed or suspected coronavirus keep hydrated .. It has been reported that some individuals admitted to hospital with COVID-19 are noted to be seriously dehydrated (ref). Dehydration reduces their chance of recovering, and some have required dialysis. A symptom of the virus can include a fever this can increase the risk of dehydration. Plus the virus causes individuals to feel sleepier therefore they are likely to drink less.

How much fluid should I drink?

Aim to have at least 1.6 – 2 litres (1600-2000ml) per day to stay hydrated, this is 6-8 large glasses of fluid. All fluids count except alcohol. Try to include tea, coffee (with or without caffeine), milky drinks, soup, fruit tea or juices, fizzy drinks (diet or sugary), squash and water.

Keeping hydrated can prevent or aid the treatment of constipation, low blood pressure, urinary tract infections (UTIs), pressure ulcers, falls, acute kidney injury and chronic renal disease.

If you have been advised to restrict your daily fluid intake by a healthcare professional due to a medical condition, please consult them before taking this advice.

Dehydration occurs when your body loses more fluid than it takes in and this can cause several symptoms, such as:

- Dry mouth
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Sluggishness/tiredness
- Confusion
- Pressure ulcers
- Kidney stones
- Constipation
- Low blood pressure
- Urinary Tract Infections (UTIs)
- Dark coloured urine
- Falls

How can I keep hydrated?

- **Remember all fluids count, except for alcohol.** Choose a drink that you are most likely to finish.
- **Do not wait until you feel thirsty** to have a drink; thirst is a late response to dehydration.
- **Monitor the colour of your urine,** if urine is dark in colour this can indicate that you are dehydrated.
- **Drink more to replace fluid that is lost through sweat,** open wounds, diarrhoea or vomit to prevent dehydration. You will sweat more in warm conditions open windows or use a fan to try and decrease room temperature.
- **Fit your fluid intake around your daily routine.**
- **Choose nourishing fruit or milk based drinks** if you are not eating well or need to gain weight.
- **Opt for water, skimmed milk or sugar-free drinks** if you have diabetes or are trying to lose weight.
- **Handled mugs or plastic tumblers** may be lighter and easier to handle.



Concerned about increasing your fluid intake?

- Limiting your fluid intake can make incontinence worse because it reduces your bladder's volume.
- Increase your fluid intake earlier in the day if you worry about urinating at night.

How do I monitor my fluid intake

- Use a measuring jug to gauge the volume of your cups/glasses at home.
- Check you are drinking enough by recording your fluid intake for a few days, if you are struggling to drink at least 1.6 litres monitor your fluid intake on a regular basis.

What if I struggle to drink enough fluid?

Select foods with a high water content, for example soup, ice cream, jellies or fruits like melon, see below for more ideas. Ice chips or ice lollies can also be a useful way of increasing fluid intake.

Sweet Options

2 tablespoons of single cream	= 20ml
Fromage frais (60g)	= 45ml
2 pineapple rings	= 70ml
Ice lolly (70g)	= 70ml
Stewed apple (85g)	= 75ml
2 scoops of ice cream	= 75ml
Small bowl of porridge (110g)	= 80ml
Custard (120g)	= 90ml
Yoghurt (125g)	= 95ml
Tinned fruit cocktail (115g)	= 100ml
Jelly (120g)	= 100ml
Instant whip	= 120ml
Serve cereal with milk	= 125ml
1 slice of melon	= 140ml
Rice pudding (200g)	= 160ml



Savoury Options

Houmous dip (50g)	= 25ml
1 boiled egg	= 40ml
Serving of gravy	= 50ml
2 celery sticks	= 55ml
2 tablespoons of cottage cheese	= 60ml
2 tablespoons of mashed potato	= 70ml
3 tablespoons of mushy peas	= 70ml
Cauliflower cheese (90g)	= 70ml
4 florets of broccoli	= 75ml
1 tomato (85g)	= 80ml
Scrambled eggs with milk (120g)	= 80ml
3 tablespoons of baked beans	= 90ml
Small tin of soup (300g)	= 265ml

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