

DEHYDRATION – THE HIDDEN RISK FOR THE ELDERLY

Everyone knows but many people seem to forget that water is what sustains life. With the latest research it is a proven fact that bottled water, (i.e. mostly REVERSE OSMOSIS PURIFIED water) and tap water is not structured water and can not hydrate your body and brain, since the size of the molecule clusters are too large to penetrate cells. You can make a huge difference by giving your loved ones structured mineral water. Structured water is formed in vortices in natural water streams and charges (energizes) the water, which results in water molecules forming small clusters.



- Wrinkled skin (no elasticity)
- Breathing faster than normal
- Dry and sunken eyes with few or no tears
- Severe cramping and muscle contractions in limbs, back and stomach

Severe dehydration requires medical attention. If you see any signs or even just suspect it, call your doctor.

Combat dehydration by drinking Hidro+ Structured Mineral Water.

Dehydration is often due to inadequate water intake, and due to the large cluster size of the water molecules in demineralized or unstructured water.

Benefits of being hydrated:

Older people who get enough structured water tend to:

- Suffer less constipation
- Use less laxatives
- Have fewer falls and
- Males may have a lower risk of bladder cancer
- Have a reduced risk of colorectal cancer.
- Have a reduced risk of fatal coronary heart disease

Mild Dehydration:

- Headaches
- Cramping in limbs
- Sleepiness or irritability
- Crying but with few or no tears
- Weakness (general feeling of being unwell)
- Dryness of mouth (dry tongue with thick saliva)
- Unable to urinate or pass only small amounts of urine (dark or deep yellow urine)

More Serious Dehydration:

- Convulsions
- Bloating stomach
- Low blood pressure
- Rapid but weak pulse

Contributing factors to dehydration, that are very often present in older patients, are:

- the side effects of prescribed medication like diuretics
- diarrhea,
- excessive sweating
- loss of blood and
- diseases such as diabetes

These are often over-looked and have a dramatic negative impact on the health of the elderly. Aging itself makes people less aware of thirst and also gradually lowers the body's ability to regulate its fluid balance.

Elders may not act on thirst as keenly

One of the reasons overlooked is the avoidance of drinking water in order to move less often. The elderly people often move with difficulty, or in some cases are bed ridden. They will resist taking in fluids in order to compensate for the discomfort of having to move or for having to ask for assistance.

Furthermore scientists warn that the ability to be aware of, and respond to thirst is slowly blunted as we age. As a result, older

people do not feel thirst as readily as younger people do, this increases the chances of them consuming less water and consequently suffering dehydration.

Less body fluids, lower kidney function

The body loses water as we age:

Age 0 - 40 - body fluid reduces down to 60% in men and 52% in women

Age 41- 60 - body fluid reduces down to 52% in men and 46% in women

The reason for the decline is the loss of muscle mass as one ages and a corresponding increase in fat cells. The gender difference is due to greater muscle mass and lower body fat in men compared to women; muscle cells contain more water than fat cells. In addition, the kidneys' ability to remove toxins from the blood progressively declines with age. This means the kidneys are not as efficient in concentrating urine in less water, thus older people lose more water than younger ones.

If dehydration is not identified and treated, the consequences to health are significant: including reduced or even loss of consciousness rapid but weak pulse, and lowered blood pressure. If rehydration is not started, the situation can become life threatening.

Hydration and Concentration

Water is essential for optimal brain health and function. It maintains the tone of membranes for normal neurotransmission. Water keeps the brain from overheating, which can cause cognitive decline and even damage. Even mild levels of dehydration can impact brain performance up to 10% cognitive decline.

Other tips to consider:

- If the elder's current water intake is below the required amount, have them increase the amount they drink gradually
- Encourage your loved one not to wait until thirsty to start drinking water
- One sign of proper hydration is the colour of the urine - it should be clear or a pale yellow
- Alcohol should ideally be avoided. Minimize the number of beverages with caffeine because of its diuretic effect, causing the kidneys to excrete more water
- When you see early signs of dehydration, offer a sport drink or electrolyte water (Mineral water with increased minerals) to enable quick replenishment of water and electrolytes needed by the body.

