

There are two types of dehydration that a person can experience: **chronic dehydration** and **acute dehydration**. Both types of dehydration can be caused by a variety of sources. The most common sources of dehydration are: flu, diarrhea, blood loss, vomiting, malnutrition and the most common problem of not replenishing liquids lost from sweating and urination.

List of Dehydration Symptoms

The many signs and symptoms of dehydration most commonly start with excessive thirst, but may rapidly progress to more concerning troubles. The body will react to the need for water by giving of signs that you should recognize. The initial signs and symptoms of mild dehydration in adults start to appear when a person has lost approximately 2% of their total fluid. These mild dehydration symptoms may include but not limited to:

- [Thirst](#)
- [Loss of Appetite](#)
- [Fatigue or Weakness](#)
- [Chills](#)
- [Dry Skin](#)
- [Skin Flushing](#)
- [Dark Colored Urine](#)
- [Dry Mouth](#)
- [Head Rushes](#)

If fluid intake is not increased and the total loss reaches around 5%, the following [effects of dehydration](#) may be experienced:

- Increased heart rate
- Increased respiration
- Decreased sweating
- Decreased urination
- Increased body temperature
- Extreme fatigue
- Muscle cramps
- Headaches
- Nausea
- Tingling of the limbs

Soon, if the body approaches a 10% fluid loss, emergency help is needed IMMEDIATELY! This level of fluid loss can and is very dangerous and often fatal! Symptoms and signs of severe dehydration include:

- Muscle spasms
- Vomiting
- Racing pulse

- Shriveled skin
- Dim vision
- Painful urination
- Confusion
- Difficulty breathing
- Seizures
- Chest and Abdominal pain
- Unconsciousness

Be aware that these are not the only signs and symptoms of severe dehydration that may be noticed, they are just the most commonly seen and experienced ones. The symptoms of dehydration will be different in each individual because the body is a complex network of systems and each person is unique. The age of an individual may also influence the manifestation of symptoms. The signs of dehydration in an infant or adolescent will not be the same as those experienced by a teenager, full grown adult or in an older person.

Always remember that **dehydration prevention** is the number one way to stop dehydration before it gets out of control - drink plenty of fluids and stay inside on extremely hot and humid days. Also be aware that **heatstroke** can come on rapidly when working outside.

Treatment of Dehydration

Dehydration is caused by the loss of water so the best [the treatment of dehydration](#) to increase the intake of fluids. Also, when a person becomes dehydrated there may be a loss of [electrolytes](#). Electrolytes are important for the electro-chemical reactions within cells and a decrease of electrolytes in the body may cause an interference of the chemical reactions needed for healthy cell operation. This can lead to a serious condition that may cause death in extreme cases. The two primary electrolytes that are need to be replenished are sodium and potassium salts. These may be found in the common sports drinks used by athletes. Another source of electrolytes are the variety of pediatric hydration drinks designed for infants. A third source is fruits and vegetables and their juices. Electrolytes are also found in salty snacks and foods but be aware that eating any food while dehydrated may increase the dehydration since increased fluids are required for digestion.

If a person is showing minor symptoms of dehydration, give them plenty of water. Inform them to drink slowly, in small sips. Secondly, begin to replace electrolytes with the drinks mentioned above. If the electrolyte rich drinks are not available, slowly replenish the body's liquids with water and follow that up after symptoms have decreased with a small salty snack or a light meal.

If a person is showing some of the more severe symptoms of dehydration as listed above, call an ambulance immediately. He or she may be past the point where ingestion of the proper fluids will help; get them medical attention as soon as possible.

Prevention of Dehydration

The average person loses 60 to 100 ounces of water a day by the normal bodily functions of breathing, sweating, and urination. This amount may increase or decrease due to the activities performed or the

temperature of the environment. Heavy exercise can lead to the loss of more than 60 ounces per hour! To prevent dehydration, simply replenish the liquids that are lost throughout the day. On average, 8 glasses of water a day is needed to totally hydrate the body, but every person is different and only you will know how much water will meet your needs. Be aware that water is the best drink, not soda, not juice, not sugar-drinks. Pay close attention to your fluid loss and take special care to replenish it as it is lost. By the time you feel thirst coming on, you are already dehydrated. Attempt to avoid becoming thirsty and be aware of the color of your urine. Dark urine is usually a sign that dehydration had begun. Drink more water, especially infants, children and the elderly.

Many illnesses and diseases can trigger acute dehydration because of the increase in body temperature that accompanies them. In addition, some may cause profuse sweating which leads to a loss of body fluids. This is the reason physicians and other medical professionals recommend that you drink plenty of fluids when illness sets in.

The body uses fluids to eliminate toxins, keep joints and muscles flexible and maintain other vital functions. Dehydration can also lead to blood pressure troubles due to the loss of electrolytes and other vital chemicals needed for proper bodily function.