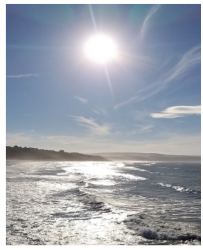


IPC Bulletin for GP Practice Staff

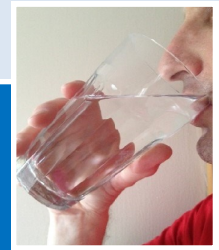
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Prevent dehydration this summer



Being hydrated has many benefits for both 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.

Dehydration can increase the risk of developing a urinary tract infection (UTI). It is possible to develop an UTI any time of the year, but there is increased risk during the summer.

Keeping track of hydration

- The recommended fluid intake is at least 1500 ml/6-8 mugs or glasses per day, per day, unless fluid restricted.
- A urine colour chart can indicate how well hydrated a patient is. (Some medications, supplements and foods, can affect the colour of urine.)
- Educate patients and their carers of the risks of dehydration and how to recognise signs such as dry skin/lips/mouth, headaches, new confusion or drowsiness.

Ways to increase hydration

- For patients identified as at risk, discuss daily hydration targets and plan ways that this can be achieved. For example, having a full glass of water with their medication, a drink with each meal and additional drinks throughout the day.
- Encourage patients to choose different drinks to add variety.
- Discuss the benefits of having food high in fluid such as jelly, ice cream, ice lolly, watermelon, smoothie or custard.

Colours 1-3 suggest normal urine

	1. Clear to pale yellow urine suggests that the patient is well hydrated.
	2. Light/transparent yellow urine suggests an ideal level of hydration.
	3. A darker yellow/pale honey coloured urine suggests that the patient may need to hydrate soon.

Colours 4-8 suggest the patient needs to rehydrate

	4. A yellow, cloudier urine colour suggests the patient is ready for a drink.
	5. A darker yellow urine suggests the patient is starting to become dehydrated.
	6. Amber coloured urine is not healthy. The patient requires more liquid. All fluids count (except alcohol).
	7. Orange/yellow urine suggests the patient is becoming severely dehydrated.
	8. If their urine is this dark, darker than this or red or brown, it may not be due to dehydration. Seek advice from their GP.

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

www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Urine-colour-guide-for-GPs.pdf
www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/resources/preventing-utis-and-dehydration-slide-show-for-general-practice-waiting-areas/

What's new

- IPC training event for General Practice and Dental Practice: 11th November, 2024. A booking form can be downloaded at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk/events/

Visit our website to find lots of IPC resources, many of which are free to download.

www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk

Call us on 01423 557340

