

A significant amount of the human body is made up of water. We need this water to survive. Water is found inside cells, within blood vessels, and between cells. Water is essential for health and is necessary for numerous bodily functions. These include:

- temperature regulation
- cellular function
- waste removal.

People can maintain the balance of water in their bodies by drinking fluids throughout the day. They may need to drink more water after exercise and in hot weather. Although water is constantly lost throughout the day as we breathe, sweat, urinate, and defecate, we can replenish the water in our body by drinking fluids. The body can also move water around to areas where it is needed most if dehydration begins to occur. Dehydration can occur at any time of the year but is most common during the summer months when people are doing activities outdoors in the hot sun which can quickly lead to dehydration. Children and older adults are most susceptible to dehydration.

Signs of dehydration

- Dizziness/ lightheadedness
- Dry mouth, skin, lips and eyes
- Headache, fatigue, lack of energy, confusion
- Muscle cramps

Tips to stay hydrated

- Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink
- Dress for the weather
- Stay inside when it gets too hot
- Eat water-rich fruits and vegetables



If you feel dehydrated stay away from:

- Soda, coffee, energy drinks
- Alcohol
- Salty snacks
- Foods high in sugar content
- Foods high in fiber

If you have signs (or see signs in someone) of severe dehydration such as rapid heartbeat, rapid breathing, sunken eyes, lack of urination, or very dark yellow urine, muscle cramps or fainting seek medical attention immediately.

Heat Waves

The first thing to do throughout the summer is to be aware of Environment Canada's Public Weather Alerts for heat warnings. A heat warning (as defined by Environment Canada) is issued when 2 or more consecutive days of daytime maximum temperatures are expected to reach 31°C or warmer and nighttime minimum temperatures are expected to fall to 20°C or warmer. They are also issued when 2 or more consecutive days of humidex values are expected to reach 40°C or higher.

Ways to beat the heat

- Make sure your air condition or fans are on, with the windows covered will help to keep your home cool
- If you can, go to air-conditioned places like public libraries or malls.
- Drink plenty of fluid to help stay hydrated
- Avoid being outside during the hottest time of the day (usually 11 am- 2 pm)
- Dress if the heat and type of activity- light loose clothes, a hat and sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher
- Slow down your activities as it gets hotter- move indoors and don't work, exercise for a period of time
- Don't forget to check with your neighbors, friends and those at risk to see if they require assistance.



Things you may want to stock up on:

- Additional water- 3 gallons per person
- Prescription medications
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Water rich produce such as apples, watermelon and cucumber

Do you need more information? RPM can help!

Interested in learning more about the role of supervisors in ensuring workers are safe? You might be interested in attending our Safety for Supervisors course. The objective of this course is to ensure supervisors are provided with information, tools and resources to effectively perform their safety and health roles and responsibilities.

Please note RPM courses are offered to RPM registered companies only. Not yet registered in the RPM program? Today is a great day to get started!

