



OF DEHYDRATION

[Electrolyte Imbalance]

A WHAT IS DEHYDRATION?

The human body needs water to function. Since we are made up of 70 percent water, loss of this valuable substance, called **dehydration**, can be dangerous.

B DO I HAVE DEHYDRATION?

Causes of dehydration may include:

- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Fever. In general, the higher your fever, the more dehydrated you may become.
- Excessive sweating: You lose water when you sweat. If you do vigorous activity and don't replace fluids (especially in hot, humid weather), **dehydration** will worsen.
- Increased urination: This may be due to undiagnosed or uncontrolled diabetes, and certain medications (examples include “water pills” and some blood pressure meds)

***Note:** Thirst isn't always a reliable early indicator of the body's need for water. Many people, particularly older adults, don't feel thirsty until they're already dehydrated. That's why it's important to drink lots of water during hot weather or when you are ill.*

Top 5 signs of dehydration in the elderly:

- Less frequent urination
- Dark-colored urine
- Extreme fatigue/sleepiness
- Dizziness
- Confusion/disorientation

C WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- Mild **dehydration** (slight decrease in urine production only) can usually be effectively treated by drinking lots of fluids (cool, plain water is preferred).
- More severe **dehydration** must be considered a medical emergency; immediately contact your health care provider, 911, or local emergency number.