

REMINDER:

Workers do not usually think about drinking fluids when they are working. During the summer months when your employees are working outside in the heat, have someone remind them to drink fluids on a regular basis. We become thirsty when we lose about 1-2% of our body water. Once it gets to 3%, then we are driven to drink fluids.

Example:

A worker weighs 200 lbs. ~ 60 percent of his weight is water: 120 lbs. One pound of water is 16 ounces. If they were to lose 2% of their water, 2.4 pounds, that would translate to about 38 ounces of fluids they are needing.

The body and mind begin to malfunction even at 1% water loss and it is estimated that there is a 5% decrease in mental function. At 2% water loss, their short term memory is affected and they have problems doing math calculations.

The body and mind function with water. Not alcohol, not caffeine when working in the hot weather.

Q: Does having had a heat related illness, like heat exhaustion, make a person more likely to experience it in the future?

A: If the heat related illness (heat exhaustion/stroke) causes cell damage in the body, then you are more prone to having this happen again. Heat exhaustion without cell damage, by itself, does not make you prone to having it again.

Q: Is it good to drink super cold water when you are needing to hydrate?

A: Cool or room-temperature water is better to drink when thirsty and needing hydration. If there is ice in the drink then it is hard for the body to absorb quickly since some warming has to take place before it will be absorbed. Ideally cool water is best absorbed by the body. Having drinks in a bath of water and ice to cool them is appropriate. Ice in the water may feel like it is cooling you but it is harder to absorb.

Q: What is the best hydrating fluid?

A: Water. Second are electrolyte hydrating drinks like Gatorade, Liquid IV etc. The combination of glucose and sodium helps the body absorb the fluids better and retain them and provides electrolyte restoration and some calories for nourishment.