Parents should know that infants and children may exhibit symptoms of dehydration that differ from those of adults. Such symptoms may include:

- Lack of wet diaper for three hours or more
- Dry mouth
- Sunken eyes
- Abdominal pain
- Less frequent urination
- Dark-colored urine
- Crying without tears
- Crying less than usual
- Less frequent sweating
- Dizziness
- Blood spots in the urine
- Irritability
- Increased appetite
- Stiffness in the neck
- Fussiness that appears sudden

How can dehydration be prevented?

Drinking enough water each day and avoiding strenuous outdoor physical activity on hot days two ways to reduce dehydration risk. In addition, avoid sugary, caffeinated, and alcoholic beverages. It is best to drink a healthy amount of water every day, regardless of whether you'll be outside. But, if you know you will be spending time outdoors when it is warm and humid, plan ahead. Drink water before you go outside to avoid dehydration. Carry water with you when you go outside, and be sure to rehydrate with more water when going back indoors.

Three strategies to beat the summer heat

1. Practice passive cooling at night. Night flushing is a passive cooling technique that involves opening the windows in a house at night if the air has cooled from daytime heat. Doing so can make indoor areas healthier and more comfortable for a home’s inhabitants during the dog days of summer. Air conditioning systems keep homes cool in summer, but over time hot and stale air can accumulate inside a home. If that air is not removed, a home can feel stuffy and airborne pollutants such as carbon dioxide can reach potentially unhealthy levels. By opening windows at night, homeowners can let that stale, potentially unhealthy air out and let in the cool air of evening warmovers.

2. Stay hydrated. It’s easy to become dehydrated at any time of year, but especially during hot and humid summer days and nights. The U.S. National Library of Medicine notes that the human body needs an average of three quarts of water per day on a normal day. However, conditions on mid- to late-summer days make it necessary for many people to consume more water than that, especially if they plan to spend time outdoors. On hot days, make sure you’re taking in more fluids than you’re losing. Take water with you when going outside, and be sure to rehydrate with more water when going back indoors.

How to avoid dehydration

This Indiana summer has been a hot and dry one, and reports with the National Drought Mitigation Center have even placed Tippecanoe County into the official moderate drought category. That means that even those of us who aren’t farmers have to pay attention to staying safe from the heat when outside. One way is to stay hydrated.

What is dehydration?

According to the U.S. National Library of Medicine (USNLIM), dehydration occurs when the body loses more fluids than it is taking in. When that happens, the body does not have enough fluids to function properly.

What causes dehydration?

Numerous things can cause someone to become dehydrated, including not drinking enough fluids. Diarrhea, vomiting, sweating too much, and urinating too much are some other factors that can cause someone to become dehydrated.

Why are outdoor enthusiasts at risk of dehydration?

Outdoor enthusiasts who spend ample time outdoors during hot weather are at risk of dehydration if they do not drink enough fluids while outside. The risk of dehydration on hot days is higher because people are more likely to sweat a lot when the temperature rises. If those fluids are not replenished, and replenished often, dehydration can occur. In addition, the USNLIM notes that outdoor exercise during hot days increases the risk of dehydration. Outdoor activities that are physically challenging, such as hiking, rock climbing, and kayaking, are a form of exercise that can make participants more vulnerable to dehydration.

What are the symptoms of dehydration?

The Mayo Clinic notes that thirst is not always a reliable indicator that the body needs water. Older adults are more vulnerable to dehydration than others because they naturally have a lower volume of water in their bodies. Aging men and women also don’t typically feel thirsty until they’re already dehydrated. It benefits people of all ages, and especially the elderly, to learn these symptoms of dehydration.

- Extreme thirst
- Less frequent urination
- Dark-colored urine
- Dry mouth
- Less frequent sweating
- Feeling tired
- Dizziness
- Dry skin

Parents should know that infants and children may exhibit symptoms of dehydration that differ from those experienced by adults. Such symptoms may include:

- Dry mouth and tongue
- Crying without tears
- No wet diaper for three hours or more
- High fever
- Being unusually sleepy or drowsy
- Irritability
- Fussiness that appears sudden

Can dehydration be prevented?

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