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# Dehydration

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## **What does it mean to be dehydrated?**

- Dehydration means your body does not have as much water and fluids as it needs

## **What causes dehydration during cancer treatment?**

- Chemotherapy and radiation
- Treatment-related diarrhea and/or nausea and vomiting
- Short/long term pain can interfere with the wish to drink or eat
- Taste changes
- Medications

## **What are some signs and symptoms of dehydration?**

- Dry or sticky mouth
- Dry, cracked lips
- Low or no urine output
- Dark yellow, strong smelling urine
- Sunken eyes
- Fatigue (feeling very tired)
- Constipation
- Confusion
- Dizziness

## **Ways to promote proper hydration:**

- **Drink 8 to 12 cups of liquids a day**
  - Take a water bottle when leaving home
  - It is important to drink even if not thirsty
  - Try flavored water
  - Keep a pitcher of water on the counter as a reminder
- **Add food to your diet that contains a portion of fluid**
  - Soup
  - Gelatins
  - Flavored ices
  - Flavored ice pops

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- **Limit consumption of caffeine containing products**
    - Sodas
    - Coffee
    - Tea (both hot and cold)
  - **If you have a poor appetite, choose items which contain both liquid and nutrition**
    - Smoothies
    - Ice Cream
    - Shakes/malts
    - Hot Cereal made with milk or water
  - **Drink most liquids after and/or between meals to increase overall consumption of liquids and solids**

If any questions, please contact your VA Dietitian:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_