

Drink Up!

Contributed by Kristin Lance, Advocate
The Arc of Aurora | 720-213-1420

Summer is upon us, which means lots of sunshine, hot weather and fun activities! However, it also means higher risk for dehydration. It is very important to stay hydrated in the summertime, so you and your family can enjoy your summer activities safely.

Babies and children are more susceptible to dehydration than adults. Children with special needs can be even more susceptible due to medical conditions and side effects of certain medications. In addition, children with special needs may not be able to recognize or communicate when they are dehydrated. Dehydration can cause serious medical problems and in severe cases, even death. The best way to avoid dehydration is to prevent it, so check out these few helpful tips!

Please keep in mind that it is very important to check in with your child's medical provider on the most effective and healthy ways you can help prevent dehydration.

1. Drink Up! Chug! Guzzle!
 - a. Drink lots and often
 - b. Drink before, during and after any physical activity
2. Drink, chug and guzzle the right liquids!
 - a. Water and diluted fruit juices are healthy choices
 - b. Avoid caffeine and sugar-heavy drinks
 - c. Try to drink liquids at moderate temperature instead of with ice
 - d. Fruit and other cool, water-heavy foods are great healthy snacks
3. If you are thirsty, then you are already dehydrated. Recognize the warning symptoms of dehydration and seek medical help immediately when necessary:
 - a. Dry mouth
 - b. Fever, vomiting or diarrhea
 - c. Decreased urine output or discolored urine (i.e. dark yellow)
 - d. Increased fatigue, weakness and/or sluggishness

Resources:

<http://specialneedsblog.dallasnews.com/2015/07/3-ways-to-maintain-hydration-of-kids-with-special-needs.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/bam/safety/cool.html>