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## SUMMER HAS ARRIVED! HYDRATION IS KEY.

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Summer has officially kicked off and the temperatures are rising. The WorkStrategies team at Select Medical not only focuses on injury prevention, we also strive to keep workers healthy and on the job. As we head into the warmer months, we emphasize hydration with our patients.

Hydration is a very important, but often overlooked aspect of staying healthy. What does being well-hydrated mean? The amount of water you need varies depending on the following:

- Climate
- Clothing worn
- Exercise/activity intensity and duration
- Medical conditions, like diabetes and heart disease
- Medications and caffeine can act as diuretics and cause the body to lose more fluid
- If you sweat heavily, you will need to drink more

Dehydration is defined as a lack of water resulting from inadequate intake of fluids or excessive loss through sweating or vomiting. Signs and symptoms of dehydration include:

- Dry mouth, dry eyes or trouble producing tears
- Difficulty sweating
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea and vomiting
- Heart palpitations
- Lightheadedness

Contrary to popular belief, thirst is NOT the best indicator that you need to drink more water. Once the thirst mechanism kicks in, you're already dehydrated.

The best way to track your hydration levels is to check the color of your urine. Pale and clear urine means you're well hydrated. If it's dark, you need to drink more fluids.

If you are an individual who loses a lot of salt when you sweat (there may be white residue on clothes after a workout, or your sweat may burn if it gets in your eyes) then electrolyte replacement will be an essential part of rehydration. Ways to replenish electrolytes include drinking:

- Coconut water
- Tonic water
- Sports drinks such as Gatorade or Powerade
- Water with electrolyte powder

For every pound of weight lost during physical activity, you need to consume one pint of water. Not sweating during vigorous physical activity is a red flag that you're dehydrated and at risk for developing a heat illness.

To learn more about WorkStrategies injury prevention programs, contact us via email at [workstrategies@selectmedical.com](mailto:workstrategies@selectmedical.com).