

# The Importance Of Keeping Hydrated For The Elderly

With summer fast approaching and the recent hot bout of weather it is really important to keep fully hydrated. This can be a challenge for most of us but for those with Dementia it can be harder to effectively manage.

## **Why keep hydrated?**

The body is made up of roughly 60% of water which is needed to enable the brain and body to function effectively. Your body uses water in all its cells, organs, and tissues to help regulate its temperature and maintain other bodily functions. Because your body loses water through breathing, sweating, and digestion, it's important to rehydrate by drinking fluids and eating foods that contain water. Being properly hydrated is also needed for some medications to work effectively.

## **What can happen if I'm dehydrated?**

Being dehydrated can have serious health implications in the elderly and those with Dementia. It can increase UTI's (Urinary Tract Infections), impair our thinking, change our mood, cause dizziness and can increase the instances of falls. Sometimes dehydration can lead to hospitalisation and decrease the effective function of organs in the body such as the kidneys.

## **Signs of dehydration.**

- Added confusion and delirium
- Dry lips
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Dark coloured, strong smelling urine
- Weakness

## **Helping the elderly and those with memory loss to increase fluid intake**

We are aware that as a carer it can often be difficult to ensure someone with Dementia or memory loss has a regular intake of fluid. Here are some tips that may help....

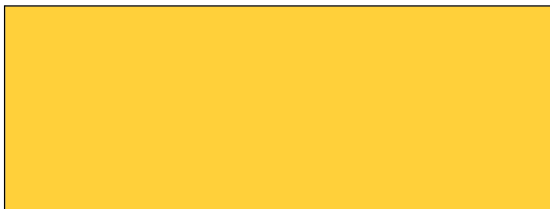
1. Always have a drink by the side of them at mealtimes and throughout the day
2. Add to water rich foods to meals and snacks, such as courgettes, cucumber, melon
3. Tea, coffee, squashes and fruit juices can also aid hydration
4. Some people prefer hot drinks to cold or the other way around, experiment with beverages at different temperatures, why not try an iced tea or coffee
5. Try smoothies, sports drinks, milkshakes and flavoured water, or even adding fruit to flavour plain water
6. Use visual aids as reminders (attached) to add fluid intake into their daily routine

Handy to place in the bathroom

## Urine Chart



**You are hydrated**



**Slightly Dehydrated  
Time for a drink**



**Very Dehydrated  
Drink 2-3 glasses  
of fluid**

## Fluid Intake Chart

Make sure you have a drink of your choice around these times to keep hydrated and healthy

Use this as a reminder

**8am -**



**10am -**



**12 noon -**



**2pm -**



**4pm -**



**6pm -**



**8pm -**

