

Improving your levels of hydration could help with:



Constipation

Inadequate fluid intake is one of the most common causes of constipation. Drinking more water and consuming dietary fibre can increase frequency of bowel movements.

Confusion

Dehydration adversely affects a person's mental performance - ranging from dizziness and headaches to reduced alertness and ability to concentrate.

Falls

The risk of falls increases with age. Dehydration has been identified as one of the risks as it can lead to a deterioration in mental state, plus an increased risk of dizziness and fainting

Low blood pressure

Older people often suffer a drop in blood pressure on standing which may result in them fainting. Drinking a glass of water five minutes before standing helps stabilise blood pressure and prevent fainting.

Hospital admissions

Dehydration can double the mortality of people admitted to hospital with a stroke and increase length of stay of people with community acquired pneumonia.

Kidney stones

Good hydration reduces the risk of kidney stones forming.

Falls can lead to a number of adverse consequences. In West Berkshire, **7,292** people aged 65 and over were estimated to have had a fall in 2015; this figure is predicted to rise to **11240** in 2030.

Falls prevention and integrated care for those who have sustained a fall is an objective of West Berkshire's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2020 and, in response to this, an Ageing Well task group is mapping falls prevention services and developing a Falls Pathway for West Berkshire. www.westberks.gov.uk/fallsprevention

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Who is at risk of dehydration?



Anyone can become dehydrated, but certain groups are particularly at risk. These include:



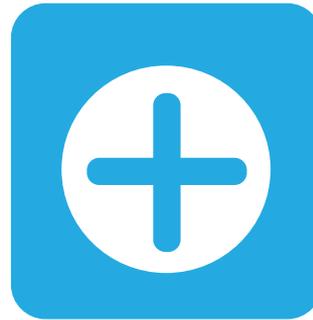
Babies and infants

They have a low body weight and are sensitive to even small amounts of fluid loss.



Older people

They may be less aware that they are becoming dehydrated and need to keep drinking fluids.



People with a long-term health condition

Such as diabetes or alcoholism.



Athletes

They can lose a large amount of body fluid through sweat when exercising for long periods.

Signs of dehydration include:

- Feeling thirsty and lightheaded
- A dry mouth
- Tiredness and confusion
- Dark coloured, strong smelling urine
- Passing urine less often than usual

A baby may be dehydrated if they:

- Have a sunken soft spot on their head
- Have few or no tears when they cry
- Have fewer wet nappies
- Are drowsy

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How much should you drink?



Below is a rough guide as to how much a person should drink on a daily basis depending on their weight. Exercise and hot weather can increase the amount of fluid required to maintain adequate hydration. Infection, weeping wounds, diarrhoea and vomiting, medication and a high fibre intake will also increase a person's fluid requirements.

Persons' weight		Fluid requirements	
Stones	kg	ml	mugs
6	38	1200	4
7	45	1300	5
8	51	1500	5-6
9	57	1800	6
10	64	2000	7
11	70	2200	7-8
12	76	2400	8
13	83	2600	9
14	89	2800	10
15	95	3000	10-11
16	102	3200	11

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