Hot Topics in Alaska Native Health FALL 2014

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HEALTHY AND HYDRATED

We often take water for granted – until our throats feel dry or we need to take a bath, wash the dishes or flush a toilet. Water is important to our health and hygiene. Water regulates our body temperature, dissolves and transports nutrients and oxygen to our cells, and even carries away waste products. Water is the only nutrient our body does not store, so our bodies need ongoing water supply to replace lost fluids. Our bodies provide warning signs of lack of water: ignoring these signs can cause dehydration, which could be harmful or even fatal.

THE EARLY SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION INCLUDE:



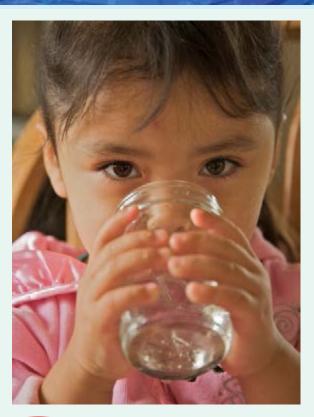


DRY MOUTH



FEELING THIRSTY

On average, our bodies are 45-75% water, which is about 10-12 gallons.



HOW MUCH WATER SHOULD YOU DRINK EVERY DAY?

We are constantly losing water through our basic bodily functions, so we need to drink enough fluids each day to replace those we lose. To replenish our water loss, The Institute of Medicine recommends that men drink 13 cups of fluids a day and women drink nine cups of fluids a day. Anytime the body loses additional fluids from exercise, heat or illness, we need to increase our fluid intake accordingly to compensate.

ANTHC is working together with many other environmental health and research organizations to provide assistance that helps improve access to clean water and wastewater safety in rural Alaska communities.

HOW DOES DRINKING WATER HELP OUR HEALTH?

Water is the best beverage to replenish our bodies and keep them hydrated and working well. It is affordable, has no calories or sugar, and is low in sodium. Drinking enough water is one of the best things you can do for your body — it hydrates your skin and helps control calories consumed, aiding in weight loss. It also helps with things that are not as visible, like brain function, digestion and muscle function. Drinking enough water will fuel your mind and body, improving your overall health and well-being.



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