

Water works

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Here in Dallas, the dog days of summer seem to last longer than any man or canine wishes. With temperatures hovering around 100 degrees, you break a sweat just walking to the car or picking up the paper.

In this heat, it is important to remember to stay hydrated, especially for cancer patients. Dehydration happens when you lose more water than you take in, and the body needs fluid to function. Water has many functions in the body, including transporting oxygen and nutrients to cells, regulating body temperature, and flushing out waste from the kidney and liver, to name a few.

Some symptoms of dehydration are: dry mouth, tiredness, headache, dizziness, and decreased urination. Seek medical attention for severe dehydration, which has symptoms of sunken eyes, low blood pressure, no urination or dark urine, no sweating, and unconsciousness.

Side effects of chemotherapy, such as diarrhea, vomiting, and fever, can cause dehydration. In hot or humid weather, you lose water through sweating so it is even more important to drink enough water. For more details on hydrating during therapy, see CURE's article ["Drink Up."](#)

I have to admit that I'm guilty of not drinking my required eight glasses a day. I have to make a conscious effort to drink water because there's just something about water's taste, or lack there of, that just doesn't do it for me. I mean, doesn't a tall, quenching glass of lemonade sound so much better than some water?

Although lemonade does provide fluid, it also provides a lot of sugar. Other drinks, such as sodas with caffeine, tea, and coffee, make you urinate more and reduce the fluid in your body. Bottom line is plain old water is the best. However if you are losing too much water, oral rehydration solutions, such as Pedialyte, may be recommended to restore fluids and electrolytes to your body.

I start every morning with a glass of water, and I always have a cup on my desk to remind me to drink throughout the day. Water is vital, especially for cancer patients. So keep yourself hydrated, and let me know if you have any tips on making water work for you.