KEY TIPS ON HYDRATION
SUMMER HOLIDAYS

ARE YOU ABOUT TO GO AWAY ON HOLIDAY?

DON’T FORGET TO CONSIDER YOUR HYDRATION NEEDS.

In a temperate climate about 2-3 L of water is lost from our bodies each day, mainly as urine but also as sweat, expired breath, and faeces.

The total amount of water lost will depend on several factors, such as gender, body size, the level of physical activity and the amount and type of clothing worn. Environmental conditions of temperature and humidity will also have an impact on water loss.

Sweating or perspiring is a skin-cooling mechanism that uses a great deal of water. Water diffusion through the skin accounts for about 0.45 L per day. However, environmental temperature and humidity, the presence of air currents, the amount of clothing worn and the level of physical activity are all factors that will influence the actual amount of water lost.

Sweat losses will be higher when exposed to high temperatures, such as in the summer or in any other hot environment, and these must be replaced.

Hydration requirements need to be considered both, during travelling and in the holiday destination.

When taking a plane
The body tends to dehydrate while travelling on aeroplanes because air in the cabin is dryer (10-20% humidity) than a typical, comfortable indoor environment (30-60% humidity) and this is due to the air conditioning. Under these conditions skin dehydration symptoms can be observed (parched lips, dry eyes, itchy eyes, etc.) and increased amounts of water are lost through the breath. Mild dehydration occurring during long flights is one of the causes of an increased blood viscosity, which in turn may increase the risk of deep vein thrombosis.

When travelling by plane, hydration levels can be maintained by drinking an additional 250 mL of water per hour over your regular hydration needs.
KEY TIPS ON HYDRATION

If you travel by car
Driving in a hot car can lead to sweating with large losses of water and electrolytes. Even in an air conditioned car, water losses can be high on a long drive. Maintaining adequate hydration while driving is of great importance, because even with mild dehydration (loss of about 1% of body weight) reductions in physical and cognitive performance and in thermoregulation and cardiovascular function can occur. With fluid deficits of 4%, more severe performance decrements are observed as well as difficulties in concentration, headaches, irritability and sleepiness1.

Frequent drinks of non-alcoholic beverages during a long automobile trip may help to reduce road fatigue. The dryness caused by an air conditioning unit can be avoided by increasing the air’s moisture levels and by hydrating the skin.

Have you checked the weather forecast at your destination?
It is important to keep an eye on the weather forecast, temperature and humidity in the city or region you are visiting in order to adjust hydration levels accordingly.

SOME PRACTICAL ADVICE:
• Get to know your usual hydration needs and adjust them to the place you are visiting and the level of activity you are planning.

• The hotter and more humid the weather is, and the higher the level of activity, the more water will be needed. You can meet your hydration needs with a whole range of beverages and with food rich in water. Take into account that:

    It is calculated that of the total water needed...

    20–30% typically comes from food and

    70–80% from beverages (all types, not just plain water)1,3

    However, this may vary greatly depending of the diet that an individual chooses.1,3

You can find information about how to recognize signs and symptoms of mild dehydration, and practical advice about hydration during hot weather in our series of educational materials:

Key Tips on Hydration: recognizing signs and symptoms of mild dehydration.

Key Tips on Hydration: hot weather