



FACTSHEET – DRINK UP

Dehydration in the workplace

62% of you is water so it's vital to keep hydrated, especially during summer. Not replacing the water you lose through everyday activity can cause severe health problems.

Symptoms of dehydration are:

- thirst, a dry mouth
- a rapid pulse
- feeling drowsy, disorientated and irritated.

As your temperature goes up, so does your level of dehydration. Mental performance and concentration goes down—this not only affects production, but also safety. So keeping track of how much you drink is important.

Drink at regular intervals

Don't just drink water when you're thirsty – your body could already be dehydrated by then. You need to drink at regular intervals.

Many jobs provide the perfect opportunity to stop for a second and have a drink.

If you are working with machinery and need to stop to refuel or reload, have a drink of water at the same time. If you are working on a farm and need to stop to open gates, have a drink of water at the same time. Little and often is the key.

By regularly stopping for a second or two to have a quick drink of water, you can maintain your performance and look after yourself at the same time.

After a hard day on the farm, in the bush or in a factory, there will always be some sign of dehydration in your body and while a nice cold beer may seem like a great idea, the alcohol actually removes even more water from your body.

So make sure you drink plenty of water too so that you rehydrate and are set for the next day.



Ways to manage dehydration

Employers have to provide and maintain a safe working environment and should make sure employees recognise the symptoms of dehydration. While personal common sense plays a large part in keeping hydrated, there are some useful tips for employers to keep in mind.

- Provide sufficient access to fluids for all staff – particularly important for outdoor workers
- Consider altering the work schedule so that heavier work is done during cooler periods
- Where possible, provide shade for outdoor work
- Allow rest breaks to be taken in cooler areas
- Ensure that workers are fit and not taking medication that will impair their ability to cope with heat

TAKE CARE, SO YOU CAN TAKE CARE

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