

REMINDER

HEALTH & SAFETY: HYDRATION DURING THE WINTER

Description of Issue and Importance

Dehydration is one of four major causes of death among people with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

Dehydration can occur in winter as well as summer and is just as serious. Energy-expending winter activities such as shoveling snow, the use of heavy clothing, and being in dry heated air can cause significant sweating and/or fluid loss.

People do not feel as thirsty when the weather is cold and tend not to drink as much.

Recommended Action and Prevention Strategy

- Watch for early signs and symptoms of dehydration such as dry mouth, thirst, muscle weakness, fatigue, headaches, dark colored urine, and no tears when crying.
- Ensure persons drink at least 8 cups of fluids daily, even if they don't feel thirsty, to maintain hydration and enhance the body's ability to maintain optimal health.
- Get immediate medical care if you see severe signs and symptoms of dehydration such as extreme thirst, no urination for eight hours, shriveled skin, dizziness and confusion.
- Treat children, older adults and persons with disabilities with greater caution as they are at greater risks from dehydration.

Related Resources

Mayo Clinic www.mayoclinic.com/health/caffeinated-drinks/AN01661

Suite101 naturalmedicine.suite101.com/article.cfm/dehydration_in_cold_weather

Outreach Services

1-866-429-5290 • outreach@fssa.in.gov • DDRSOutreach.IN.gov

For more reminders and information, please visit DDRSOutreach.IN.gov & www.iidc.indiana.edu/training.



Indiana Family & Social Services Administration
Division of Disability & Rehabilitative Services
Bureau of Quality Improvement Services