

Tips for effective summer hydration

Mayo Clinic News Network

DEAR MAYO CLINIC: I am prone to kidney stones, so I know it's important for me to stay hydrated while I exercise. But do I need to change what I drink in the summer? A friend mentioned that I might be better with a sports drink versus water. I'm also wondering how much I should drink. Can you provide any advice?

ANSWER: Staying hydrated during exercise is important. You can become dehydrated if you take in too little fluid, especially during the hot summer months. Conversely, consuming too much fluid can be problematic. Some people are known to experience what is known as exercise-induced low sodium, or hyponatremia. Finding a balance is importance.

The purpose of drinking fluid — whether water or electrolyte-containing beverages — is to rehydrate the body and put fluid back into your system so your organs can function properly.

How much to drink and when depends on your situation. Generally, it's recommended that you should consume at least two liters of water or other beverages per day.

The general rule of thumb among health care professionals is to drink to thirst. Although guidelines



Viktoriya Kuzmenkova/Dreamstime-TNS

Staying hydrated during exercise is important.

speak to hydration before, during and after exercise, I always tell people to look and listen to your body as the best indicator when you need hydration. That said, thirst isn't always a helpful indicator of hydration status, particularly when exercising. If you're exercising and thirsty, you are already well on your way to becoming dehydrated, compared to if you were resting and thirsty.

You will need to take in more fluid than usual at times. During the summer months, for instance, when weather is hotter and more humid, it is important to drink more fluid, especially if you are exercising outdoors.

As far as what to drink, for most people, water is the best place to start. Depending on how extensively you exercise, having a beverage that

includes electrolytes also is important to replace nutrients and electrolytes lost during sweating, such as sodium and chloride.

Sodium is important because it helps you absorb glucose and water. Aim for about 450 milligrams of sodium per 24 ounces of sports drink. Avoid salt tablets, as they do not include all the electrolytes you need and you can easily use too much. You also can look for a drink

with some carbohydrates, since they provide fuel for your working muscles.

It is best to consume about half your fluid intake in water and half in a beverage that contains electrolytes. Mind the amount of sugar intake, though. While sugar is important, especially for endurance athletes, too much sugar can cause gastrointestinal issues, including bloating, cramping or diarrhea. One

recommendation is to keep sugar below 30 grams per 24 ounces of a sports drink.

The best rule of thumb is when you exercise, drink to thirst, and hydrate your body with plain water and, as needed, a sports beverage. In the summer, also be mindful about how you feel as you exercise.

I find that many people do not drink enough water daily, so they may feel better after increasing hydration, no matter the source. In addition, avoid drinking alcohol when you are outdoors because alcohol is a diuretic. This means alcohol will cause your body to lose water, leading to dehydration much faster.

As you spend time outdoors, be aware of symptoms of dehydration, which can include:

- Extreme thirst.
- Less frequent urination.
- Dark-colored urine.
- Fatigue.
- Dizziness.
- Confusion.

Also, if you experience cramps or headache while exercising, it is best to stop, hydrate and potentially seek medical attention. It is important to rule out other warm-weather issues, including heat exhaustion.

■ *Dr. Brittany Beel, Emergency Medicine, Mayo Clinic, Jacksonville, Florida*

Dealing with damage from summer storms



JENNIE HAGEN
GARDENING WITH GRANDMA

As much as I don't like to think about it, catastrophic gardening happens. The sort I have in mind is from our frequent summer thunderstorms that arrive with rapidly accelerating wind, that dreaded hail and punishing rain.

Our plants don't like it, either! After the storm has passed, and we dare venture outside to take an inventory of the damage, think big things first. Do any trees have broken limbs and have the limbs completely severed from the tree? If completely severed, are they still hung up in the crown (the top, living part of the tree), are they hung up on other branches, are they dangling from electric lines, or have they fallen to the ground and can be safely removed

Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative has excellent information on their website — otec.coop — regarding downed lines, including those with tree entanglements, and who to contact. Just click on the "Safety & Education" tab, or the "Outage Center."

So now it's safe to go outside. You've taken inventory of the trees and personal safety, what's next? Let's do food first. Have your tomatoes taken a beating? If you don't trim off the broken vegetation, this will encourage increased insect damage or disease. But once the damaged stems are removed, you'll be surprised at how quickly they bounce back.

Your vegetable patch may be needing your help. It's basically the same treatment, whether it's zucchini or lettuce.



Fort Worth Star-Telegram-TNS, File

Hail can cause severe damage to gardens.

Some damage may not become evident at first, but as warm days continue you will notice leaves that are dying or increased damage to ones you thought escaped the storm. Just continue to be diligent about looking for damage and removing it.

There are abundant fruit trees, shrubs, and vines in our area. Depending on their degree of being ripe will depend on whether you actively trim off the damaged fruit or not. Ripe, or near-ripe, fruit will always be more prone to have greater damage, especially from hail, then their unripe counterparts. This is when some tough decisions will be made, how much can you salvage, and how much is lost.

And last, but certainly no less important, how about our delightful flowers? Annual flowers (those that only grow one year) may not have time to recover before cold weather sets in but give them a chance! Our perennial plants (those that come back each year) will almost always survive if treated with the same restorative techniques as already described. If one suffers serious damage and you must trim it almost to the ground, don't despair, it will most certainly return in the spring!

And in our next edition of Gardening With Grandma, I'll share my tips for avoiding a complete washout from intense rain or flash

flooding.

We gardeners are a tough lot, we can do this "damage control" even if it's difficult at times. Just remember, a happy plant

is a trimmed plant!

■ *Jennie Hagen is a native Oregonian who has spent 40 years gardening east of the Cascades. She is a member of the Garden Writers*

Association and has previously written for the Home & Garden section of The Oregonian, and for the La Grande Observer, the Baker City Herald, and the Burns Times Herald.

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