How to keep hydrated

Cystic Fibrosis Service

Don’t Dry Out!

Unfortunately, the human body does not function like a camel, we are unable to “store” water prior to mask-wearing.

Drinking the right amount of fluid is important for all people living with CF. We often focus more on adequate hydration and fluid intake in summer time when the weather is warmer. However, the use of heaters in winter and now the constant wearing of masks brings its own challenges for keeping well hydrated.

Common signs of dehydration (not enough fluid):
- Thick, dry sputum or sputum that is harder to clear
- Headaches and/ or fatigue or tiredness towards the end of the day
- Dry skin, dry mouth, lips and / or dry nasal passages
- Constipation

Tips to keep hydrated:
- Drink plenty of fluid
  - 40ml - 50ml of fluid per kg of body weight.
    - E.g. for a 60kg person this means around 2.4 litres of fluid per day in winter and 3 litres in summer or warmer environments.
  - See your CF dietitian to work out your exact fluid (and electrolyte) needs
- Carry a water bottle with you to encourage you to drink
- Know your fluid target – aim to spread your intake out around your commitments for the day

Examples of fluids

Water Sports drinks Soft drinks
Cordial Juice Hydralyte
Milk, including flavoured milk

The CF dietitians can help with personalized plans and guidance on how best to manage your fluid and electrolytes needs. They can be contacted by email at cfdietitians@alfred.org.au
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**Mask wearing & hydration**

Most of us now need to wear a mask when outside of our homes. This has had a big impact on how much fluid we can drink during the day.

**When at work/ school...**

- Take fluids with you to have on your way to and from work
- Know your target fluid intake for the day
- Drink during your breaks, and during your trip home from work
- Remember to wash your hands before and after putting on and taking off your mask
- Always follow the instructions at your workplace about safe mask wearing
- Take note of the signs of dehydration

*A Melbourne medical expert recently said “…face masks are our ‘vaccination’ until effective vaccines become available in the future”*

**When exercising...**

- Drink plenty of fluid before you begin exercising.
- Avoid touching / pulling down your mask once you have put it on.
- Slow down your exercise and take regular breaks
- Drink plenty of fluid after you have finished exercising
- Disposable masks should be thrown in the bin after exercise or as soon as they become moist or soiled
- Exercise away from crowded areas
- Cloth masks should be washed daily, by hand or washing machine, and dried thoroughly – ideally in direct sunlight
- If you are exercising where you get out of breath or puffing such as jogging or running you do not need to wear a mask BUT you must carry one with you to put on when you stop running


The CF physiotherapists can be contacted on 9076 3450