



# 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, and feeling drowsy, disorientated and irritated. All these symptoms will affect your performance and judgement at work, especially during the hotter months.

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.

### Mental performance and concentration all start to decrease with increasing temperature and dehydration.

Poor and/or reduced performance not only affects production, but also safety.

Someone who is tired, hot and bothered is more likely to suffer an injury. 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

It is the duty of employers to provide and maintain a safe working environment. Employees should have instruction on the causes and recognition of the symptoms of dehydration and have a buddy system in place.

- Provide sufficient fluids to prevent dehydrated workers
- Consider altering the work schedule so that heavier work is done during cooler periods
- Where practicable, 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

**Health and Safety**  
**IT'S NO JOKE.**

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