Hydration is Never Optional

Dehydration happens when your body uses or loses more fluid than it takes in and it can happen in the summer or winter, indoors or outdoors. If you suspect that dehydration is starting to set in, there’s a simple way to check: the pinch test. Dehydration affects skin’s ability to change shape and return to normal. With your thumb and index finger, pinch the skin on the back of your hand and hold it for a few seconds. If it doesn’t bounce back right away and takes time to return to its normal position, you’re likely dehydrated and need to replenish your fluids.

We all know that dehydration can lead to illnesses like heat stress or life-threatening heat stroke but it can also contribute to other serious complications.

1. Decreased cognitive and motor skills. Studies show that it only takes 2 percent dehydration to cause impaired performance in tasks that require attention, motor, and memory skills.
3. Seizure and loss of consciousness caused by unbalanced electrolytes like potassium and sodium. These help transmit electrical signals between cells.
4. Hypovolemic shock is one of the most serious and life-threatening complications arising from dehydration is hypovolemic shock, or low blood volume shock. It happens when you lose more than 20 percent of your blood or fluid supply, which prevents the heart from pumping enough blood to keep the body running. It can lead to organ failure and requires immediate emergency medical attention.

The easiest way to prevent dehydration is to ensure you are consistently taking in fluids throughout the day, even if you don’t feel thirsty. While the recommended daily intake varies depending on age, climate, and physical activity level, workers should aim to drink about one cup of fluids every 15 to 20 minutes to replace what is being lost.