

# Dehydration: Are you at risk?

*Provided by your Neighborly Care Network Dietitian*

Did you know that dehydration can lead to health problems? In severe cases, you may even need hospital treatment. That's why it's very important to prevent this condition.

As we get older, we often increase our risk for dehydration. Many things can contribute to this risk. Some can be controlled and some cannot.

Following is a brief questionnaire to determine if you are at risk for dehydration:

	YES	NO
Are you female?		
Are you 85 years old or older?		
Do you have diabetes, urinary incontinence, or kidney disease?		
Do you experience frequent fevers, vomiting, or diarrhea?		
Do you take laxatives, diuretics, or sedatives?		
Do you drink less than six cups of fluids each day?		
Is your urine often a dark yellow?		
Do you have problems swallowing?		

Answering "yes" to any of the above questions means that you are probably at higher risk for becoming dehydrated. Even if you aren't thirsty, be sure to drink small amounts of fluids throughout the day. Here are some things to try:

- *Plain or flavored water*
- *Fruit juices*
- *Low-sodium soups and vegetable juices*
- *Diluted sports drinks*
- *Low-fat or fat-free (skim) milk*
- *Tea*
- *Coffee*

