

The Continence Team
2nd Floor
66 High Street
Aylesbury
Bucks
HP20 1SD
Tel: 01296 318648

How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand sanitiser available at the entrance to every ward before coming in to or after leaving the ward. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand sanitiser. Staff will let you know if this is the case.

How will **drinking fluids prevent me from falling?**

Patient information leaflet

If you require a translation or an alternative format of this leaflet please call the Continence Team on 01296 318648

Author: Sally Dale
Issue date: June 2018
Review date: June 2020

Leaflet code: Fluid/Falls
Version: 1.0

Safe & compassionate care,

every time

Older people are much more vulnerable to dehydration which can lead to an increased risk of falling.

Dehydration occurs when your body loses more fluid than it takes in and this can cause several symptoms:-

- Light-headedness
- Dizziness
- Sluggishness/tiredness
- Confusion
- Low Blood Pressure
- Can affect mental functions such as memory, attention, concentration and reaction times.

33% of people aged over 65 fall each year

50% of people aged over 85 fall each year

1 in 10 falls in older people results in a serious injury

Older people often experience a reduced sensation of thirst, meaning they do not realise they need to drink. Some medications such as diuretics and laxatives may increase the likelihood of dehydration and those who are incontinent may limit their fluid intake.

The recommendation is 6-8 cups of fluid each day which includes fruit, juice, tea, coffee (preferably decaffeinated), milky drinks and water.

'Wet' foods such as jelly, blancmange and soups are good.

Mild dehydration adversely affects mental performance and increases feelings of tiredness. Other common complications include low blood pressure, weakness, dizziness and an increased risk of falls.

Water helps to keep the urinary tract and kidneys healthy. When fluid intake is reduced the risk of urinary tract infections increases. Dark coloured urine is a symptom of dehydration.

Good hydration not only prevents falls, it can also prevent constipation, improve the mood, stimulate the appetite and reduce restlessness and disrupted sleep patterns.

Inadequate fluid intake is also one of the most common causes of constipation. Drinking more fluid can increase stool frequency and enhance the beneficial effect of fibre intake.

Remember:

- **Have fluid available at all times**
- **Ensure water is fresh and palatable**
- **Have a variety of hot and cold drinks**
- **Consider more 'wet' foods as a way of increasing fluids**