

Nutrition Tip: Hydration

Good nutrition is very important for people with Sickle Cell disease. Good nutrition helps promote health and prevent complications. Meeting fluid needs and staying hydrated is very important. Staying hydrated can prevent you from having vaso-occlusive crises, pain crises, strokes and infections associated with sickle cell disease.

Fluid needs are more intense during hot weather, which we have an abundance of in South Carolina! Also, fluid needs increase with lots of physical activity.

Tips for meeting fluid needs:

- Always carry a water bottle with you
- Start your day by drinking a glass of water and remember to drink every 2 hours, at least, to meet your daily needs.
- Add extra fluid when you have pain and with exercise

There are many different choices when it comes to fluids. In general, it is best to choose fluids that are non-caffeinated. Caffeinated drinks may have a mild diuretic effect, which can lead you to urinate more. It is also important to avoid sugary drinks that do not offer our bodies the nutrition needed to stay healthy. So, choose more: water, flavored water, low fat milk and occasionally 100% fruit juice.

Here is a great idea for summer: Infused waters!

Fresh fruit, herbs, and some vegetables make great flavors for water. Citrus, berries, melons, fresh ginger, and mint are all good choices. You can float the ingredients freely in water or use an infusion pitcher. Infused water is best 2 to 4 hours after you have made it. Or, you can let it infuse overnight in the refrigerator.

For All Options:

- 5 cups of water
- 1 cup ice cubes (optional)

For Strawberry, Basil and Lemon:

- ½ cup strawberries, stemmed and sliced, fresh or frozen
- 5 large basil leaves, torn
- 1 lemon, thinly sliced

For Honeydew, Cucumber and Mint:

- ½ cup honeydew cubes
- 1 cucumber thinly sliced
- 10 fresh mint leaves, torn

For Blackberry, Orange and Ginger:

- ½ pint blackberries
- 1 orange thinly sliced
- 1 (2 inch) piece ginger peeled and thinly sliced



Reference: Eating well with sickle cell, Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children

Anna M. Johnson, MHSA, RD, LD, CLC

Dietitian Director

Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

SC DHEC