

Health Advice

The right way to drink in summer

Our summers are getting hotter every year, and we are finding ourselves having to get used to ever-longer summers with heat waves that we simply aren't used to. After all, no matter how hot it is we still have to get to work, concentrate and do a good job. Incidentally: a day is considered hot when it is over 30 degrees, and a "tropical night" is when the temperature doesn't drop below 20 degrees. We will probably see a fair few of these days this summer.

Although most people love summer, extreme heat is also often associated with health risks. The elderly, young children and people with pre-existing conditions are particularly at risk. And even people in good health are affected by the heat. If you have to do hard physical labour in high temperatures or need to concentrate when indoor temperatures rise, your working day isn't exactly going to be easy. People sweat and get tired quickly, and their heart and circulation are placed under greater strain. As we can't always take a holiday on hot summer days and there's no such thing as a "heat-free day" for workers, we have put together few tips to help you keep a cool head and get through your working day despite the heat.

Keeping your working environment cool

Not all workplaces have air conditioning. If you have the option to do so, move your workplace to a cooler location such as an air-conditioned office, or move your workstation to the basement. You could even try to start work in the early hours of the morning. To keep workplaces cooler: air them out early in the morning, then keep the windows closed. Reduce sources of heat: Only switch on printers, machines, copiers and lamps when needed. Small fans don't reduce the temperature, but they do bring movement to the air. Spend your breaks in cooler places, including outside in the shade, and don't forget to use appropriate UV protection. And something which is very important for your health and concentration: make sure you drink enough!

Drinking properly on hot working days

On hot days, our bodies need more fluid: "To prevent dehydration, i.e. internal dehydration, we need to drink more than usual when it's hot. The German Nutrition Society recommends drinking at least 1.5 litres a day at normal temperatures. We absorb the rest of the fluid we need from our food. On hot days, people need significantly more fluid depending on their body weight, and whether they are carrying out any strenuous physical activity or practicing sport," explains Micaela Schmidt, a nutritionist at BARMER.

If you don't drink enough, you will quickly find yourself feeling tired and listless, have a hard time concentrating and suffer from headaches. Make sure that things never come to this!

These ten tips will help you make sure that you are drinking enough on hot days:

1. When it's hot at night, we sweat more: Start the day with a large glass of water after you get up.
2. Drink at least two litres a day. Or even more.
3. Drink it throughout the day, not all in one go. And make sure you do so before you get thirsty.
4. The ideal summertime drinks are tap water, mineral water, unsweetened herbal and fruit teas and spritzers.
5. You could even try out some "infused waters" to mix things up. Fill a carafe with water and add any flavourings you like such as cucumber slices, lemon, ginger, fresh berries or herbs.

6. Use a nice bottle or a carafe that you can keep within easy reach at your workplace.
7. Place drinking bottles as reminders in the places you frequent during the day (in the car, at your desk, in the kitchenette, in meeting rooms, etc.) and take a sip whenever you need.
8. In the summer, the right drinking temperature is also crucial. The rule is: not hot and not cold, about body temperature. If drinks are too hot or too cold, your body generates more heat to equalise the temperature in your stomach.
9. We also absorb fluids when we eat. Fruit and vegetables containing water such as cucumbers, watermelon, strawberries and lukewarm soups are perfect.
10. Do you ever forget to drink despite all your best intentions? There are now lots of apps available to help you keep track and remind you when it's time for your next sip.

Extra tip

Why not organise a 30-day challenge with your colleagues? Your goal: drink six glasses of water every day while you are at work. Let's get started!

Can you actually drink too much water?

Find out how much water your body really needs and whether there are any risks from drinking too much water on our German-language website.



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