FACT SHEET ABOUT DEHYDRATION

Q. What is dehydration?
   A. A loss of fluid from the body. This occurs when more fluid is lost than taken in.

Q. What causes this?
   A. Some causes include:
      - Fever
      - Exposure to heat
      - Sweating
      - Vomiting
      - Diarrhea
      - Poor fluid intake
      - Infections
      - Severe burns
      - Diabetes (increased urination due to high blood sugars)

Q. What are some common signs and symptoms?
   A. Some common symptoms (including nonverbal are):
      - Increased thirst
      - Dry mouth/swollen tongue
      - Weakness/dizziness
      - Confusion
      - Fainting
      - Lethargy
      - Decreased urine output
      - Dark color to urine
      - Palpitations (“racing heart”)
      - Refusing to talk
      - Refusal to participate in activities
      - Increase in behaviors
      - Eyes and cheeks look “sunken in”

Q. What should be done next?
   A. Report symptoms promptly the physician.

Q. How can this be prevented?
   A. Some preventative measures include:
      - Make sure consumer takes in adequate fluids (if on a fluid restriction, consult with the doctor)
      - Avoid exposure to extreme heat
      - Avoid alcohol/caffeine (these can quicken fluid loss)

Follow agency policy.


For more information on this or any other physical or behavioral health topic, please call the HCQU office at 888-321-5861 or visit our website at www.hcq.apshealthcare.com.

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