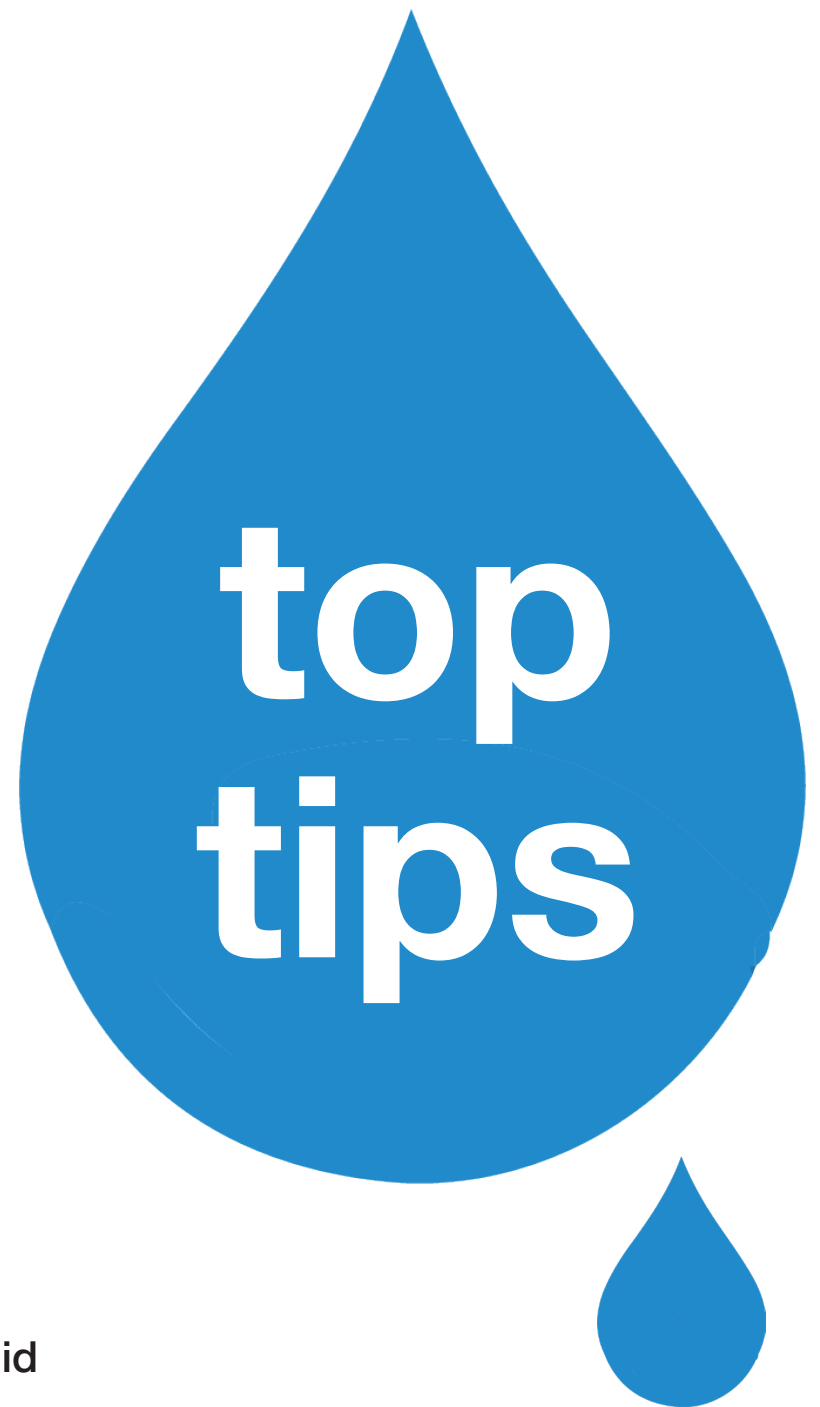


Tackling dehydration

Dehydration in warmer weather can cause a significant increase in the incidence of urinary tract infection (UTI) and other severe infections associated with it.

Here are some key facts to help prevent your patients becoming dehydrated:



1 Keep drinking

- Adults need a minimum of 1.5 litres of fluid every day
- This is equivalent to at least 8 large cups or mugs of fluid

2 Any fluid is good fluid

- The most important thing is to consume sufficient fluids. It does not matter what form this fluid takes. Coffee and tea are a preferred source of fluids for many people and have been shown to have no significant dehydrating effect. Alcohol is also still a fluid but should be consumed in moderation
- Fluid rich foods such as jelly, ice cream and yoghurt can also supplement fluids in drinks

3 Look out for signs of dehydration

- Dry skin or mouth, dark coloured urine, headaches, confusion and drowsiness can all be signs of dehydration

4 Older people and young children are particularly vulnerable

- Make sure everyone has a cup they can use easily. Cups that are heavy or have small handles can be very difficult to hold
- Some people may also need assistance to hold the cup and drink. Avoid straws for those with difficulty swallowing, due to increased risk of choking
- Encourage those worried about incontinence not to stop drinking if they are concerned about leaking urine. Concentrated urine resulting from not drinking can irritate the bladder and increase the risk of infection