

## **Fact Sheet - Hydration and Chronic Pancreatitis**

**by Kathianne Sellers**

Proper hydration is important in the health of all people, but especially for people with chronic pancreatitis. While many people with chronic pancreatitis are aware of the need for fat restriction, few are aware of the need for adequate hydration. Many of our patients at the Pancreas Center at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, in Boston, MA have flares (increased pain) when they are dehydrated. While the exact reason is not known at this time, it is assumed that the lack of fluid assists in the accumulation of pancreatic sludge. This sludge can then lead to blockages that can irritate the pancreas. Dehydration often occurs due to warm temperatures and excess water losses, air travel, increased activity level, and inadequate intake. It is important to understand that thirst is a sign of dehydration and therefore not a timely indicator of our fluid needs.

Fluid needs can be met with any beverage that does not have caffeine or alcohol. Caffeine and alcohol should be limited, as they are diuretics and promote fluid loss and can also stimulate the pancreas. Foods with high water content such as fruits, vegetables, and soups are also helpful in meeting fluid needs. Remember that thirst is an indicator that you are already dehydrated. Be sure to drink **BEFORE** you feel thirsty. Your best bet? Carry a water bottle with you!

Remember that on hot days or days of increased activity, your fluid needs may be higher. Use the formula below to calculate your fluid needs.

Body weight x 16 = number of milliliters (mL) of fluid one needs to drink per day

Convert milliliters to cups: **240mL = 1 cup**

**For example:**

Sarah weighs 125 pounds.

125 pounds x 16 = 2000mL

2000mL divided by 240 = 8 cups

Therefore, Sarah's fluid needs are 8 cups per day.

***Kathianne Sellers, R.D., was a nutritionist at the Pancreas Center at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center***



*This fact sheet is provided courtesy of the National Pancreas Foundation. To learn more about our organization, please visit our website at [www.pancreasfoundation.org](http://www.pancreasfoundation.org).*