



KEEPING COOL IN THE SUMMER

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The temperatures are warming in Florida! Some of you stay and endure the heat of the summer while others depart at this time and head for another place called home. Others still head back to reality and back to their main place of business. Whether you stay or leave all have experienced the beauty of Naples this season! Now it is time for the warmer months of the year and preparing to keep the body cool is important to your health.

Exercising in the warmer months can cause an increased internal body temperature. This can increase stress on the body. Maintaining a proper fluid balance with water and electrolytes can help the body function at its best. Excess heat can harm the body and create deleterious effects on the organs of the body.

It is important to avoid dehydration always but especially in the summer months. All chemical reactions within the body depend upon water. Having the proper amount keeps the body balanced and the proper electrolytes allow the body to function in a safe manner. Sweating is one way the body cools itself. When dehydrated, the body can go into heat stress first and if the temperature of the body does not get reduced, no further sweating is possible and the person goes into heatstroke. Severe consequences up to and including death can occur.

What can be done to keep the body cool? Obviously staying in a cool environment is helpful by drinking plenty of fluids is still pertinent to avoid dehydrating the body. The other biggest

thing one can do is to eat cooling foods.

Cooling foods are foods that have high water content. This high water content allows for the body to participate in activities while trying to keep the body's internal temperature from overheating. Ensuring the addition of including cooling foods and drink in the diet throughout the day can help. Excess consumption of heating foods should be avoided and could be the reason why you feel tired or you do not perform well while participating in summer activities.

Drinking plenty of water is most important and if exercising in the heat. Sweating does send liquid out to the skin and the evaporation process can cool but if sweating a lot, electrolytes such as sodium and potassium can also accompany the sweat which can be detrimental if not replaced. Thus, adding electrolytes may be beneficial. If, however, cooling foods and drinks are consumed, these items help to keep the body temperature lower. The other benefits of many of these foods are that they contain nutrients to help maintain balance.

There are lists of cooling foods to discover just by perusing the internet. Here are just a few cooling foods staples to consider when preparing for not only

exercise times but for fun additions to everyday meals:

- Mint or peppermint in a salad or drink
- Coconut water, lime or lemon water, and iced green tea
- Watermelon, melon, bananas, and kiwis
- Curd
- Mushrooms/onions
- Green leafy vegetables to add to a sandwich or salad
- Celery (95% water)
- Lemongrass, lemon balm, coriander, and basil
- Yogurt

If you participate in a sport, it is a good idea that a half-hour before to have a full glass of water. Cut up some watermelon or cucumbers to take along with you and consume a piece during a break. The higher the water content the better.

Avoid eating too many heating foods. These include caffeine, alcohol, chile and spicy foods, dried fruits and nuts, cloves, cinnamon, and ginger. Do your research and fill your refrigerator with all of the cooling foods that will help make your summer months not only comfortable but healthy.

One more thing...look up cooling gloves (Stanford University). These are now being tried with professional teams and others to keep the body cool and to enhance performance by cooling the palms of the hands. This is due to the cooling effect and the way the anastomosis is in the hands, allowing the cool to get into the bloodstream to prevent overheating and all for quicker recovery and better performance. You can just hold a can of frozen lemonade to get a similar effect!

Here's to Your Health! Happy Cooling!