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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SUMMER IS UPON US – ARE YOU PROPERLY HYDRATED?

Woodsville, NH -- Did you know that 75% of Americans are chronically dehydrated, resulting in slower metabolism and fatigue, decrease in strength and endurance, an increase in existing health challenges, even reduction in short-term memory. Sixty to seventy percent of your body weight is water. One of the easiest ways to help the body function optimally is to keep it well hydrated.

“The best way to determine if you’re getting enough water every day is to listen to your body,” says Dr. Robert Shmerling of Harvard Medical School. “Are you excessively thirsty? Are you urinating less frequently than normal? Are you feeling unwell? Are you dizzy when you stand up? Is your mouth dry? While there are reasons other than dehydration that can cause these symptoms, if you can answer NO to all these questions, then you’re probably getting enough water.”

How do you maintain adequate hydration levels:

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends a daily consumption of 9-13 cups of water to maintain adequate hydration.
- Drink pure alkaline ionized water whenever you can. Whether thirsty or not, drink a lot and drink often. Drink in ounces, half your body weight measured in pounds.
- Don’t count on coffee, sodas, or fruit juices. The caffeine and sugar contents are dehydrating. Mixing equal parts juice and water will do the job better.
- Have a water bottle handy at all times!
- Consume watery fruits and vegetables such as watermelon, kiwi fruit, tomato, orange, carrots, apples, etc.
- Drink a glass of water 30 minutes to an hour before exercising, and another glass or more after you’re finished.

“Don’t underestimate the amount of fluids lost from perspiration on hot summer days,” Says Sandra Edwards, Registered Dietician & Sports Nutritionist. “Keep drinking to cool the body and prevent dehydration. When the body sweats, it not only loses vital moisture but essential minerals too, including potassium, a mineral found in abundance in fruits and vegetables. Eating healthy snacks replenishes minerals and helps absorb and retain fluids.” Don’t worry about drinking too much. It is difficult for a healthy individual to over-hydrate. “If you can’t remember when you last had a glass of water, you should stop what you’re doing and get one,” advises Mary Arnold, a USA Track & Field-certified running coach. “Good hydration is integral to a healthy lifestyle.”

If you have any topics that you would like to see discussed in this column please call Maryanne at (603) 747-9189 or email maldrich@cottagehospital.org

Cottage Hospital is a 25-bed, Critical Access Hospital, serving the beautiful Upper Connecticut River Valley. For additional information regarding Cottage Hospital and any of our services visit us on the web at www.cottagehospital.org or call (603)747-9000.

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