



## CAUSES OF DEHYDRATION.

By: Bill Gookin, No. 1 in a series of occasional reports on wellness and dehydration \*\*\*

We usually think of dehydration as related to physical exertion, heat stress or illness, but you can get seriously dehydrated without any real effort and under cool conditions. You realize that you're getting dehydrated when it's hot and you're sweating, and even when it is hot and dry and you don't notice the sweat. But, cold air is dryer than hot air and you can get even more dehydrated in cold weather; compound the low temperature and low humidity with altitude and you can lose 2 quarts an hour without realizing it. Other factors that commonly contribute to dehydrating you further include air conditioning, antihistamines, decongestants, caffeine and alcohol. All of these cause dehydration and its various effects, beginning with impaired mental acuity ... a little slower making quick decisions, forgetting words that you know, transposing terms, errors in work, recreation, sports and everyday activities .... making poor decisions, impaired judgment, stiff aching muscles, headache, irritability .... all before you even feel thirsty ... if your mental processes would let you recognize that you are thirsty. Too often, the fact that you are too busy to think about staying hydrated, also causes you to override the thirst reflex. As Ironman Triathlon Champion Scott Tinley said, "You've got to keep thinkin' drinkin'!"

**Air conditioning:** the dried air pulls moisture from your lungs as you breathe; we can recognize this in a desert condition, but don't think about the effect with cool air. The process of cooling the air causes a great deal of moisture to be lost from it ... ever notice how much an air conditioner drips while it is working? The relative humidity drops 50-70% as the air is cooled. The same is true of cold winter air; it holds far less moisture than warm air, another reason people get more colds in the winter ... it's not just the cold weather. The air conditioning in airplanes combined with the low air pressure can cause you to lose enough fluids to have you end up with a cold or the flu a couple of days after your trip.

**Antihistamines and decongestants:** both work by dehydrating the cells and can have a profound effect on mental acuity. This is why airline pilots are not permitted to use them less than eight hours before flying. Don't you wish that this requirement applied to surgeons and others in such decision-intensive jobs? This can also affect the performance of athletes, especially ones who depend upon fast reactions ... like tennis or handball. Have you noticed how many more errors are made in the final innings of a baseball game or the last quarter of a football game?

**Caffeine** is a diuretic causing you to lose fluids via the kidneys, more than you have in that cup of coffee or soft drink. Recent studies indicate that people who drink more caffeine may have built up a tolerance and may not lose as much of what they drink as less frequent users. Another study indicates that these "heavy drinkers" may be chronically dehydrated and, therefore, can't lose much more fluid.

**Alcohol** also causes you to lose more fluid than you drink, more than caffeine because it is an anti-antidiuretic .. same result, different process (it suppresses the anti-diuretic hormone). Check with us if you're confused ... or drink some of VITALYTE™. Even more serious than this systemic loss of fluids, alcohol also pulls water directly from the tissues, especially affecting the stomach, liver and brain and ultimately seriously damaging these organs. Gookinaid hadn't been on the market long before we started getting testimonials about how effective it is in alleviating the effects of hangovers and in preventing them, depending upon when you drink the VITALYTE. Boston sportscasters announced on the radio during the 1978 Boston Marathon that "Gookinaid is the best thing in the world for hangovers!"... and they should know! (talk about an endorsement)

Keep yourself hydrated by avoiding these factors that contribute to dehydration or, if you can't avoid them, anticipate the need to stay hydrated by drinking enough VITALYTE when you know you're going to be losing fluids, like when you're taking a trip, going skiing, summiting a 14'er or having one too many on a Saturday night... and remember Scott Tinley's advice: "You've got to keep thinkin' drinkin'!"

\* For 40 years athletes have known us as Gookinaid, but we are not just a drink for athletes. Now the world knows us as Vitalyte™, a drink for everyone. Same fast, effective formula...band new name!

\*\*This article is the opinion, advice and testimonial of the author and your results may vary. If you have a medical condition involving dehydration or electrolyte imbalance, you should consult a physician before following this advice.

\*\*\*Documentation on file.