



As temperatures soar, staying hydrated becomes paramount to maintaining your health and well-being. Dehydration can lead to serious health issues, particularly during periods of extreme heat. While drinking plenty of fluids is essential, incorporating specific foods into your diet can also help keep you hydrated and healthy. Here are some tips on how to eat during extreme heat to avoid dehydration.

## 1. Hydrating Foods

Certain foods have high water content and can significantly contribute to your overall hydration. Here are some of the best hydrating foods to include in your diet:

- Watermelon: With a water content of over 90%, watermelon is an excellent choice to help keep you hydrated. It's also a good source of vitamins A and C.
- Cucumbers: Cucumbers are about 95% water and provide a refreshing crunch in salads or as a snack.
- Citrus Fruits: Oranges, grapefruits, and other citrus fruits are not only hydrating but also packed with vitamins and antioxidants.
- Berries: Strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries are rich in water and nutrients, making them a perfect summer treat.
- Leafy Greens: Lettuce, spinach, and kale have high water content and are ideal for salads and smoothies.
- Tomatoes: These versatile fruits are about 94% water and can be enjoyed in salads, sandwiches, or as a snack.

## 2. Balanced Meals

During extreme heat, it's important to consume balanced meals that provide essential nutrients and hydration. Focus on:

- Salads: Incorporate a variety of hydrating vegetables such as cucumbers, tomatoes, and leafy greens. Add a source of protein like grilled chicken or tofu to make it a complete meal.
- Smoothies: Blend fruits like berries, bananas, and a handful of spinach with water or a hydrating liquid like coconut water. Smoothies are an easy and delicious way to boost your hydration.
- Soups: Chilled soups such as gazpacho are hydrating and nutritious. They can be a refreshing alternative to hot meals during summer.



### 3. Snack Smart

Choose snacks that will help you stay hydrated rather than contributing to dehydration. Some good options include:

- Fruit Popsicles: Make your own popsicles using fresh fruit and water or coconut water. They are a fun and hydrating snack for hot days.
- Yogurt: Opt for plain yogurt and add fresh fruit for a hydrating and protein-packed snack.
- Vegetable Sticks: Carrot sticks, celery, and bell pepper slices are great for snacking and have a high-water content.

### 4. Electrolytes Matter

When you sweat, you lose not only water but also electrolytes, which are vital for bodily functions. Foods rich in electrolytes can help replenish these essential minerals:

- Bananas: High in potassium, bananas are a great snack to help restore electrolytes.
- Coconut Water: Naturally rich in electrolytes, coconut water is a superb hydrating beverage.
- Nuts and Seeds: These contain magnesium and can be a good addition to your diet to maintain electrolyte balance.

### 5. Avoid Dehydrating Foods and Beverages

Certain foods and drinks can exacerbate dehydration, so it's best to limit their intake during extreme heat:

- Salty Foods: High salt content can lead to increased thirst and dehydration.
- Caffeine and Alcohol: Both can have diuretic effects, causing you to lose more fluids.

Eating the right foods during periods of extreme heat can play a significant role in maintaining hydration and overall health. By incorporating hydrating foods, balanced meals, smart snacks, and electrolyte-rich options, you can better protect yourself from the dangers of dehydration. Remember, while diet is crucial, it's still important to drink plenty of water throughout the day, especially when temperatures rise. Stay cool, stay hydrated, and enjoy a healthy summer!