



Winter Dehydration 03/10/12

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Robert Guaderrama

rguaderrama@cbs7.com

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Odessa, Texas - It's a warning we often hear during the hot summer months, to stay hydrated. Doctors say winter is now an even more critical time to watch for signs of dehydration. Medical Center Hospital's emergency room has been busy with patients with serious cases of dehydration. They want to warn people that though it's not hot outside, you are still at risk. It's a common concern during the summer, drink water and keep cool to prevent dehydration but doctors say, we need to pay closer attention this time of year.

"The danger in the winter is that dehydration can be unrecognized, usually we catch the cases in the summer, people sweat, they may pass out but when it's colder outside, you may not sweat as much and may become dehydrated with out knowing it," said Dr. Sudip Bose, Medical Center Hospital.

ER's have recently been busy with dehydration cases, predominantly from the oil field.

"When you're working hard in the oil field, you're not thinking about drinking water, these are long hours, people work overnight and drink caffeine which gets you dehydrated even more," said Dr. Bose.

The issue has oil field safety coalitions stepping up to educate workers.

"There are laws from OSHA, they've made presentations with steps, we've set up posters to help employees recognize the symptoms of hydration, heat exhaustion and strokes," said Gene McCann, Permian Basin STEPS.

Doctors say the main thing to focus on is drinking plenty of water, even though you

may not feel overheated or thirsty.

"By the time your body is thirsty, it's probably too late, your body doesn't become thirsty until you're pretty volume depleted, so you wanna stay on top of this, whether you're an athlete, oil field worker or just an elderly person at home, winter is a time when you have to be extra careful," said Dr. Bose.