

WATER TIPS

Water is vital to life but is often overlooked as a stress reliever. Every cell and every system in the body is dependent on water for healthy functioning. Normal daily activity causes the loss of about 2 litres of water, which must be replaced throughout the day. Our brains are composed of approximately 70% water and our blood is more than 85% water. Researchers say a 5% drop in body fluids will cause a 25% to 30% loss of energy in the average person. A 15% drop in body fluids causes death.

It can be quite dangerous to rely on thirst alone in determining your body's need for water. In fact, if you feel thirsty, you are probably already dehydrated. As we age, we lose our perception of thirst and usually fail to drink adequate amounts of water.

Early signs of dehydration include:

- Fatigue
- Muscle weakness
- Poor concentration
- Fogginess
- Headaches
- Stiff joints
- Dry eyes or nasal passages
- Dry mouth

Further dehydration may lead to:

- Other depressive symptoms including moodiness, apathy and sleep disturbances
- Anxiety
- Tension
- Hypertension
- Overeating
- Higher blood cholesterol
- Constipation
- Kidney stones
- Certain types of cancer and diabetes

Consuming water is such a simple wellness strategy that it is often not even considered when developing a personal health plan. Many of the symptoms of dehydration are mistakenly associated with other conditions and illnesses and could be easily eliminated by increasing water consumption.

Outcomes of Adequate Water Consumption:

- Increases energy and focus
- Hydrates the cells and organs
- Hydrates the skin

- Cleanses the body of toxins
- Lubricates the vocal cords
- Enhance the digestion and absorption of nutrients
- Helps prevent constipation
- Helps kidneys functioning
- Regulates body temperature
- Keeps blood from thickening and controls blood pressure
- Carries nutrients and oxygen
- Lubricates joints and cushions the body's organs
- Decreases risk of cancer

How much is enough?

If your goal is to maintain a minimum level of hydration, then the '8 glass' rule is acceptable. That's 8 full glasses of water every day. However, if your goal is to carry a buffer against toxic chemicals, offset the negative impact of processed and preserved foods that are consumed, or compensate for additional activity, then you should drink even more.

10 Water Tips:

1. Most of your water should come from beverages that do not contain caffeine since caffeine acts as a diuretic. You need to increase your water intake by 2 cups for every 1 cup of caffeinated beverage.
2. Decrease the consumption of pop. The active ingredient in pop is phosphoric acid, which will leach calcium from the bones and is a major contributor to osteoporosis. It also confuses the body's thirst response with the hunger response. It generally takes about one month of drinking water instead of pop to reduce the sugar craving and appreciate the flavour of pure water
3. Alcohol, like caffeine, is also dehydrating
4. Keep water with you when you are at work
5. Increase the consumption of watery foods such as soup, cucumbers, tomatoes and other fruits
6. Take the urine test - if it is pale and almost colourless than you are well hydrated - it is dark than you probably need more fluids
7. Get in the habit of drinking water half an hour before meals
8. Cool water is easier on the stomach and digestive system, however, cold water uses more calories as the body tries to warm up
9. When working, drink more water to compensate for the extra loss and try sipping along the way
10. Develop a program to consciously increase your water intake over a couple of weeks.

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**** Provided as general information only. A physician should always be consulted for diagnosis and treatment of any and all medical conditions.***