

## Drink Lots of Water Daily

Drink a minimum of 8-12 servings of water daily for at least 25 days of the month, and record your consumption every day.

### Why is hydration important?

Our bodies are comprised of 60-70 percent water. Water helps regulate body temperature, transports nutrients, removes toxins and aids in digestion. Several studies have even discovered a direct correlation between the quantity of fluid consumed and the incidence of certain cancers.<sup>1</sup>

Water is an essential component to good health, and keeping hydrated can keep you well. Symptoms of dehydration include headache, constipation, fatigue, thirst and aches in the joints and back. The color of urine can indicate hydration level; it should be almost clear and virtually odorless.<sup>2</sup> An average person needs to urinate more than four times per day when properly hydrated. Excessive thirst and urination can be a sign of high blood glucose (diabetes or pre-diabetes).<sup>3</sup>

A number of factors can impact an individual's hydration level. Environmental conditions such as high altitudes, hot weather or heated indoor air during cold weather can contribute to dehydration. Engaging in extended periods of exercise (greater than an hour) requires replacing one and one half to two cups of fluid lost through sweating. After intense physical activity or an illness that includes vomiting or diarrhea it becomes necessary to rehydrate with an electrolyte containing beverage.<sup>4</sup>

In general, water is the best hydrator and does not add extra calories. Cool water is absorbed more quickly than warmer water. Caffeinated or alcoholic beverages have been shown to act as diuretics in some studies. Do not rely on them for rapid rehydration. On the flip side, over-hydration can overwhelm your kidneys causing low electrolytes, which can rarely result in a serious condition called hyponatremia.<sup>5</sup>

### How much water should a person drink?

A serving of water is eight ounces or one cup. An average female needs nine servings of water each day and an average male needs twelve. An overweight person needs an extra cup of fluid for every twenty five pounds of excess body weight. Women that are pregnant need to consume ten cups of water daily and women that are breast feeding need 13 cups of water daily.<sup>6</sup>

### 6 Water Drinking Tips

1. Keep water on hand during work so that it is readily available to sip throughout the day.
2. Drink plenty of water before, during and after exercise.
3. Drinking water during and after meals. (This helps break down foods and aid digestion.)
4. Try using fresh lemon or lime in water to make it more palatable.
5. Snacking on fruits and veggies helps keep you hydrated. (As much as 20 percent of your daily hydration requirements can be attained through a healthful diet filled with fresh vegetables and fruits.)<sup>7</sup>
6. For optimum health try using a stainless steel water bottle, which limits your exposure to harmful chemical compounds that can leach from plastic bottles.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>R. Davidhizar, C. L. Dunn, and A. N. Hart, "A Review of the Literature on How Important Water is to the World's Elderly Population," *International Nursing Review* 51:3 (September 2004): 159-166.

<sup>2</sup>Dehydration. (2009). Retrieved January 20, 2009, from [www.mayoclinic.com/health/dehydration](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/dehydration)

<sup>3</sup>R. Davidhizar, 159-166.

<sup>4</sup>Jacqueline R. Berning, *Personal Trainer Manual*, 2d ed. (San Diego: American Council on Exercise, 1997), 141.

<sup>5</sup>Hyponatremia. (2007). Retrieved January 20, 2009, from [www.mayoclinic.com/health/hyponatremia](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/hyponatremia)

<sup>6</sup>Ross Anderson and Shawn Franckowiak, *Clinical Exercise Specialist Manual*. (San Diego: American Council on Exercise, 1999), 168-169.

<sup>7</sup>Water: How much should you drink every day? Retrieved January 20, 2009, from [www.mayoclinic.com/health/water](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/water)

<sup>8</sup>How safe is the food supply? (2007). Retrieved January 20, 2009, from [www.consumersunion.org](http://www.consumersunion.org)