

HYDRATION

JULY 2024

Hydration is replacing fluids you lose when you sweat, breathe, and use the restroom. On average, you need to replace about 2-3 quarts of water daily. Replacing that loss is done through both food and drink. Many of the foods you eat are high in water, especially leafy greens and fresh fruit.

Water or other non-sugary drinks should be the go-to for hydrating. If you are sweating a lot, vomiting, exercising, working in a hot environment, or having diarrhea, your fluids should include electrolyte-rich drinks such as Gatorade, Body Armor, or Liquid IV. If only water is available, adding a pinch of salt helps the body absorb the water faster and easier.

Staying hydrated does more than quench your thirst. Many systems in the human body require proper hydration.

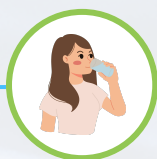
- **The brain:** memory, mood, concentration, and reaction time are all hurt by dehydration. In fact, as little as 2% fluid loss can affect these. Adding a couple of more glasses of water can stabilize emotions and help with anxiety.
- **Digestion:** proper digestion cannot occur without water. Even when mildly dehydrated, digestion slows down leading to constipation, gas, bloating, and even heartburn.
- **Circulation:** being hydrated aids in circulation and the flow of oxygen to the brain. Dehydration can cause the heart to work harder, causing fatigue and a lack of focus.
- **Weight:** drinking water gives you a sense of being full, which then decreases snacking and the number of calories you consume. This helps with weight loss.
- **Joints:** when properly hydrated, the cartilage in the joints stays well lubricated. This decreases friction from movement and, thus decreases joint pain.

How much should I drink?

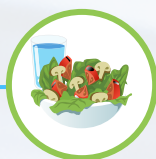
The age-old rule wisdom of eight 8 ounce glasses of water a day is a good general rule. However, another way to estimate how much you should be drinking is to take your weight and divide by 3. The result is the number of ounces to drink per day.



Tips to stay hydrated:



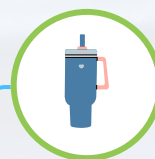
Drink a glass of water first when waking up in the morning.



Have a large glass of water with every meal.



Don't wait for thirst; sip on water throughout the day.



Carry a refillable water bottle with you to make all day sipping easier.



Stop for a sip when you pass a drinking fountain.



Add lemon, or other fruit, to give water flavor if you don't like plain water.