

Health Benefits of Water

Why do we need to drink water?

Water is your body's principal chemical component. Every system in your body depends on water. For example, water flushes toxins out of vital organs, carries nutrients to your cells and provides a moist environment for ear, nose and throat tissues.

Why do you urinate so much at night? Gravity holds water in the lower part of your body when you are upright (which often causes leg swelling). When you lie down the lower body seeks to level with the kidneys. This is when the kidneys remove the water, and causes the need to urinate.

Lack of water can lead to dehydration, a condition that occurs when you don't have enough water in your body to carry out normal functions. Even mild dehydration can **drain your energy** and **make you tired**.

When should we drink water?

To ward off dehydration and make sure your body has the fluids it needs, **make water your beverage of choice**. It's also a good idea to **drink water at the right times** to maximize its effectiveness in the body:

- Drink 1 glass of warm or room temperature water after waking up (preferably with lemon). This helps **activate your internal organs**.
- Drink 1 glass of water 30 minutes before a meal to **help digestion**.
- Drink 1 glass of water before taking a bath which **helps lower blood pressure**. If soaking in a hot tub, take cold water with you to drink throughout your soak to avoid dehydration.
- Drink 1 glass of water before going to bed to **avoid stroke or heart attack**. Drinking water before bed also hydrates your muscles, which will **ease night time leg cramps** and Charlie horses.



Why is it that water takes up 70% of the earth's surface, and 60% of our bodies – yet *so little* of our thinking?

How much water should you drink each day? It's a simple question with no easy answers. Studies have produced varying recommendations over the years, but in truth, your water needs depend on many factors, including your health, how active you are and where you live.

Although no single formula fits everyone, knowing more about your body's need for fluids will help you estimate how much water to drink each day.

Water is essential to good health, yet needs vary by individual. These guidelines can help ensure you drink enough fluids.

How much do we really need to drink?

Every day you lose water through your breath, perspiration, urine and bowel movements. For your body to function properly, you must replenish its water. The **recommended intake for men is roughly 3 liters** (about 13 cups) of water a day, and for **women it is 2.2 liters** (about 9 cups) of water a day. You may need to modify your total fluid intake depending on how active you are, the climate you live in, your health status, and if you're pregnant or breast-feeding.

Exercise. If you exercise or engage in any activity that makes you sweat, you need to drink extra water to compensate for the fluid loss. Drink a glass of water before and after exercise, and stay hydrated during exercise.

Environment. Hot or humid weather can make you sweat and requires additional intake of fluid. Heated indoor air also can cause your skin to lose moisture during wintertime. If your mouth is dry and sticky, you are dehydrated.

Illnesses or health conditions. You may need increased fluid intake if you develop certain conditions, such as fever, vomiting or diarrhea, bladder or urinary tract infections. However, some conditions such as heart failure, kidney, or liver diseases may impair excretion of water and even require that you limit your fluid intake.

Pregnancy or breast-feeding. Women who are expecting or breast-feeding need additional fluids to stay hydrated. It is recommended that pregnant women drink 2.3 liters (about 10 cups) of fluids daily and women who breast-feed consume 3.1 liters (about 13 cups) of fluids a day.

Staying safely hydrated.

Generally if you drink enough fluid so that you rarely feel thirsty and produce 1.5 liters (6.3 cups) or more of colorless or light yellow urine a day, your fluid intake is probably adequate. If you're concerned about your fluid intake or have health issues, check with your doctor or a registered holistic dietitian. He or she can help you determine the amount of water that's right for you.

Beyond the tap: Other sources of water

Although it's a great idea to keep water within reach at all times, you don't need to rely solely on what you drink to meet your fluid needs. What you eat also provides a significant portion of your fluid needs. On average, food provides about 20 percent of total water intake. For example, many fruits & vegetables, such as watermelon and tomatoes, are 90 percent or more water by weight. Juicing is a wonderful source of fluid and nutrient intake.

**Water is still your best
beverage of choice**

It is calorie-free, inexpensive and readily available.

**"If there is magic on this planet
It is contained in water."**

Loran Eisely



Anne Kaarid
Natural Health Therapies & Workshops

380 13th Street West
Owen Sound, ON N4K 3W6
P: 519.377.6645
E: anne@kaarid.ca
www.kaarid.ca