



Hydration & Drink Choices

HYDRATION

We all know water is essential to everyday life! Staying properly hydrated is vital for a healthy lifestyle. How do we know if we drink enough water throughout the day? Are we really hydrated? Follow the information below to learn more about hydration, drink choices and tips to staying hydrated.

Water is essential!

We must remember there is no set amount of water that should be met by everyone to ensure you are properly hydrated. It is recommended men drink about 15.5 cups of water daily while women drink 11.5 cups of water daily, but that varies depending on health conditions, activity level, and even where you live. About 20% of our water intake comes from foods, so it is important to be consuming food that has high water content. Examples include celery, watermelon, green pepper and oranges. Not only does water provide us with proper hydration, it also helps get rid of waste, regulates temperature, lubricates and cushions joints and protects sensitive tissues.

Tips to Drinking more Water

- Try water infused with fruit. Lime, orange, cucumber or lemon slices.
- Have a water bottle next to your desk to remind you to drink.
- Have a glass of water before a meal, bed or when you wake up.
- Use an app to track the amount of water you drink.
- Set a timer to remind you to drink water.



Signs of Dehydration

Dehydration occurs when you lose more fluid than you are taking in. Your body then doesn't have enough water to help with every day functions that are necessary to a healthy lifestyle. Being dehydrated is very dangerous in younger and older adults. A few symptoms of dehydration include:

- Extreme Thirst
- Dark colored urine
- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Less frequent urination
- Dry mouth

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms it is important to focus on drinking water and getting rehydrated. Slowly drink water until you are feeling better. If you have been experiencing vomiting or diarrhea for more than 24 hours, it is important that you visit your local doctor to take action.

HEALTHY DRINK CHOICES

Beverages: An Asset or Liability?

When we are making a conscious effort to improve our health and loose or maintain weight, we typically pay close attention to the types and amounts of foods we eat. The same is not always true about what we drink.

The average American drinks one out of five of their daily calories. These calories can really add up and be considered “empty” if our beverage does not contribute towards our daily nutrient needs.

Soda pop is an example of an empty calorie drink. Pop contains large amounts of sugar with little else. Grabbing a diet soda may seem like a better choice, but it does not have any nutrient value either. There is also a variety of mixed research related to diet pop and its role in weight loss, weight maintenance and weight gain.

Other examples of beverages that cost calories with few health benefits include specialty coffee drinks, alcoholic beverages, energy and sports drinks, and fruit drinks with added sugars. Some of these may have more added nutrients than pop, but you can find the same vitamins and minerals along with additional benefits in low-calorie foods or healthier beverage choices.

Water should be the top beverage of choice. Water is necessary for keeping bodily fluids in balance that help with digestion, absorption, circulation, transportation of nutrients, and maintenance of body temperature. It energizes muscles, helps kidneys cleanse and rid our body of waste, supports normal bowel function, and prevents a number of disorders. It can also play a role in controlling calories. Use it in place of high calorie beverages or drink it right before and during a meal to help you feel fuller faster.

Other healthy drink options include 100% juice, low-fat dairy products, and zero calorie choices such as unsweetened tea and coffee. Except for fiber, the nutrient level of 100% fruit and vegetable juices can be very much the same as a whole fruit or vegetable itself. Be sure you are drinking 100% juice, though. If the label says fruit/juice drink, cocktail, or fruit-flavored it contains added sugars and possibly little to no real juice. Also consider portion size. Juice is more concentrated in calories and natural sugars than the fruit or vegetable itself. For example, a half cup of apple juice would have almost the same number of calories and carbohydrates (sugars) as one cup of apple slices.

Smoothies are a wonderful way to add fruit and vegetables to your day. Make your own to avoid added sweeteners and whole milk products that premade smoothie products commonly contain. Non-fat or low-fat milk or non-dairy milk (such as soy and almond) are great sources of protein and calcium. Add them to your smoothie or create your own low-calorie steamer.



Additional Resources:

- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/water/art-20044256>
- <https://livesmartcolorado.colostate.edu/?s=water>
- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/dehydration/symptoms-causes/syc-20354086>





Hydration and Drink Choices

Applying the Lesson

Choose one of the following activities to apply what you learned about your health and your healthy goal setting. Write a short paragraph (3 to 5 sentences) to describe what you did and learned from the activity selected. Report your Applying the Lesson results by Online form, email, fax or hard copy to your county Extension Office.

Option 1: Track your water intake for 3 days. Did you meet the recommended daily amount? Did you see any changes in your body and or mood from drinking more water? What tips did you use to increase your water amount?

Option 2: Look at your total body water information on your Inbody scan. Reflect on this information. Does it surprise you that your body is made up of this much water? Are you around the 60% of your body is made up of water?

Option 3: Look at the labels for two unhealthy/bad drink choices. What drinks did you choose? How many calories, sugar and fat are in each? If you struggle with healthy drink choices how are you going to curb those cravings?