

Don't Wait! Hydrate and Feel Great!

Hydration helps us stay healthy and energized. Fluids, especially water, help:

- * Regulate our body temperature
- * Improved digestion
- * Carry nutrients around our body
- * Cushion organs and joints
- * Get rid of toxins
- * Regular our bowels

We lose water through sweat, breathing and elimination. If you lose more fluid than you consume, then you may become dehydrated. Fluid needs vary depending on your age, gender, medical conditions, and level of physical activity. Aim for the following daily amount of fluid:

Age	Gender	Recommended Daily Amount
Adults (18 years+)	Men	3L (12 cups)
Adults (18 years+)	Women	2.2 L (9 cups)
Childbearing Age	Breastfeeding Women	3.125 L (12.25 cups)
Children (1-3 years)	Boys and Girls	875 ml (3.5 cups)
Children (4-8 years)	Boys and Girls	1.250 L (5 cups)
Children (9-13 years)	Boys	1.750 L (7 cups)
Children (9-13 years)	Girls	1.625 L (6.5 cups)
Teens (14-18 years)	Boys	2.625 L (10.5 cups)
Teens (14-18 years)	Girls	1.750 L (7 cups)
Seniors (65 years+)	Men and Women	1.5 L (6 cups) minimum

How do you know if you are not hydrating yourself enough?

You can become dehydrated even before signs appear. Seniors and young children are at higher risk of developing dehydration due to having reduced awareness of their thirst, and difficulty regulating their body temperature. Hence it is important to drink fluids regularly throughout the day, to stay hydrated.

Severe dehydration can be fatal but is unlikely to occur in people with access to safe drinking water. Mild dehydration can occur if you are not drinking fluids regularly. Symptoms include:

- * Thirst
- * Dry lips and mouth
- * Flushed skin
- * Tiredness
- * Irritability
- * Headache

- * Dizziness
- * Fainting
- * Low Blood Pressure
- * Increased heart rate
- * Dark strong-smelling urine

Tip: Dark yellow, strong-smelling urine is a sign of dehydration. If your urine is light yellow and clear it usually means that you are drinking enough, and therefore well hydrated.

What beverages should you choose?

Choose More Often	Choose Less Often
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Skim or low-fat milk (0-1%) • Unflavoured milk alternatives such as soy or almond milk • Non-caloric beverages such as sparkling water, coffee, or tea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports drinks or vitamin water • Fruit juice • Whole milk or chocolate milk • Sweetened milk alternatives • Regular pop • Alcoholic beverages • Specialty coffees or tea with added syrup and whipped cream

Water is the best choice and should make up most of your daily fluid intake.

Sports drinks are usually not needed. Water and a healthy diet with plenty of vegetables and fruits can provide sufficient fluid and electrolytes to keep you well hydrated. If you engage in high intensity exercise or are an elite athlete, then you may need to replace electrolytes with sports drinks; be sure to dilute with half water to reduce your sugar intake.

Sweetened beverages and pop are not recommended for hydration. The high sugar contents will draw water into the digestive system to dilute the sugar. Also, juice, chocolate milk and sports drinks have similar (and often more) sugar, carbohydrates, and calories ounce for ounce as regular soda. Therefore, these may increase your weight because of the additional calories from sugar or make your blood sugars very high for those living with diabetes. [Check out this article about hidden sources of sugar in food and beverages.](#)

Research suggests that *caffeinated* beverages such as coffee and black teas, are less dehydrating than what was once believed, and therefore, can be counted towards your total fluid consumption. However, remember that caffeine is a stimulant drug; too much may make you feel jittery or affect your sleep, moderation is a good thing.



Energy drinks are a very poor choice to consume when exercising or to give you a boost because they have twice the amount of sugar as sport drinks, fluid absorption in the body is hindered, delaying hydration. While energy drinks may taste refreshing, they should not be consumed before, during, or after exercise when you need to replace sweat loss. Additionally, energy drinks can cause a spike and crash to your energy and blood sugar levels, leaving you feeling less energized overall. Many energy drinks have artificial ingredients. Reading labels is important if you have any food allergies or intolerances.

Alcohol is a diuretic. Drinking beer, wine, or spirits, can cause your body to lose fluids which increases the risk of dehydration. In addition, alcohol can interfere with metabolism of carbohydrates so it's not a recommended choice for people living with diabetes. Alcohol has been known to cause a low blood sugar for up to 24 hours after consumption. For those watching their weight, alcohol has almost as many calories gram for gram as fat. Alcohol has seven calories per gram; fats have nine calories per gram. Thus, your alcohol intake should factor into your daily calorie count when trying to lose weight or maintain weight already lost.

Consider the following when consuming caloric beverages

When caloric beverages make up a regular part of our daily calorie intake we may experience increased hunger, and difficulty with appetite management. Liquid calories do not fill us up as well as whole foods, due to their lack of fibre, drinking instead of chewing on food, lack of actual chew and ease of consumption. Caloric beverages also provide “empty calories” which means they provide lots of sugar with little to no vitamins and minerals. Caloric beverages are not needed or recommended as part of a well-balanced diet.

Many people consume liquid calories in addition to their meals, which provides excess calories and carbohydrates, neither of which are helpful for blood sugar nor weight control.

Here are some tips to keep hydrated as part of a healthy diet:

- Do you forget to drink water throughout the day? Try using a timer or set up a reminder on your phone when it is time to drink water.
- Use a smart water app to keep track of how much you drink.
- Jot down your water intake when keeping a food diary.
- Place water bottles in high traffic areas in your home.
- Find plain water to be too bland? Flavour your water by adding fresh fruits or vegetables as well as herbs like mint. You can also try sparkling or carbonated water for some extra fizz without all the calories you get from pop.



It is important to be aware of your hydration status and to drink lots of fluids daily to prevent dehydration. Remember that the body consists of up to 75% water. Therefore, replenishing your body supply of water is crucial for proper body function and overall health. Be good to yourself and keep well hydrated!

Want more information about keeping hydrated? Check out the following resources:

Canadian Diabetes Association Taps PepsiCo to Educate its Certified Educators? – Weighty Matters

<http://www.weightymatters.ca/2014/01/canadian-diabetes-association-taps.html>

Unlock Food Facts on Fluids: How to Stay Hydrated

<https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/articles/water/facts-on-fluids-how-to-stay-hydrated.aspx>

Unlock Food, Sports Nutrition: Facts on Hydration

<https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Physical-Activity/Sports-Nutrition-Facts-on-Hydration.aspx>

Unlock Food: The Juicy Story on Drinks

<https://www.unlockfood.ca/en/Articles/Child-Toddler-Nutrition/The-Juicy-Story-on-Drinks.aspx>

Alberta Health Services: Choose Healthy Drinks

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-choose-healthy-drinks.pdf>

Alberta Health Sciences: The Energy Drink Buzz:

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-energy-drink-buzz-h.pdf>

