



# Hydration

## Did You Know?

Recent studies have found that moderate amounts of coffee and tea do not act as a diuretic as previously thought.

However consuming more than 5 cups of coffee a day does make you have to urinate more often than other beverages.

Drinking water throughout the day is the best way to stay hydrated. When possible, consume fluids that do not contain calories and limit intake of high-sugar beverages such as soda, lemonade, and flavored milks.



Consuming enough liquids throughout the day is important for proper hydration as well as reducing the likelihood of dehydration. Dehydration occurs when not enough water is consumed to replace the fluids lost through urine, feces, and breathing. Dehydration can range from mild to severe.

Thirst is not a reliable measure of dehydration as you are already mildly dehydrated when you become thirsty. Urine color is a better indicator of hydration. If urine is clear or a light color, you are well hydrated; however if urine is dark yellow or amber you are dehydrated.

Pay attention for these symptoms of **mild dehydration**:

- Headaches
- Constipation
- Dizziness
- Dry mouth
- Fatigue

Symptoms of **severe dehydration** include:

- Fever
- Rapid Breathing
- Unconsciousness
- Extreme thirst
- Irritability and confusion

Mild dehydration can be relieved by consuming liquids. However, if you experience symptoms of severe dehydration, seek medical attention immediately.

## Preventing dehydration

The Institute of Medicine recommends that men consume **13 cups of fluid a day for men and 9 cups a day for women**. Fluids include beverages such as water, juice, milk, coffee, tea as well as fluid in foods. High fluid foods include most fruits and vegetables especially watermelon and cucumbers, soup, and popsicles.

To increase your fluid intake:

- Carry around a water bottle throughout the day.
- Aim for at least half of your fluids to be water.
- Take a short drink every time you pass a water fountain.
- Drink a glass of fluid with every meal.
- Take a drink after using the restroom.
- Drink a glass of water before eating a snack.
- Try adding fruit to water for a light, refreshing taste.
- Drink a glass of fluid before you leave for work in the morning.
- Drink a glass of fluid as soon as you get home in the evening.
- Increase your fruit and vegetable consumption.



Children can be at a higher risk for dehydration than adults. Children do not recognize thirst as well as adults. Help children consume enough liquids by serving them drinks with meals and encouraging them to drink something often especially in hot weather or during physical activity.