



## Summer Health: Hydration

### Why is it important to drink enough water?

Water keeps every part of your body working properly. It helps your body flush wastes and stay at the right temperature. It can help prevent kidney stones and constipation.

You lose water throughout the day—through your breath, sweat, urine, and bowel movements. If you live in a hot climate, you lose even more fluid.

You need to replace this lost fluid to stay healthy. If you don't get enough water, you could become [dehydrated](#). If you get very dehydrated, your body no longer has enough fluid to get blood to your organs. This is dangerous.

### Do you have to drink only water to stay hydrated?

All liquids (except alcoholic and caffeinated) help you stay hydrated. Clean filtered water is usually the best choice, because it has no sugar or calories. You also get water through food. Some fruits and vegetables contain a lot of water, such as watermelon and lettuce.

### How much water do you need to drink every day?

A rule of thumb is to drink  $\frac{1}{2}$  your body weight in ounces per day of clean filtered water.

You may sometimes need to drink more water than usual if you:

- Exercise intensely, especially in a hot climate (add electrolytes to your water).
- Are sick, such as with the flu, or have a health problem like a urinary tract infection.
- Are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Drink caffeinated beverages (drink additional 8 ounces per caffeinated beverage)
- Drink alcoholic beverages (drink additional 8 ounces per alcoholic beverage)

### How can you tell if you are drinking enough water?

The easiest way to know if you're drinking enough fluid is to look at the color of your urine. If you're drinking enough water, your urine will be clear or pale yellow. A darker yellow means you aren't drinking enough water.

If you have any health problems, always talk to your doctor before increasing the amount of water you drink. You may need to limit your fluids if you have certain health concerns, such as kidney problems or heart failure.

*It can be dangerous to drink too much water. Too much water is dangerous because it would dilute the amount of sodium in your body. This imbalance could cause serious problems, such as confusion, seizures, and coma.*

