

HYDRATION

Water is critical in the maintenance and regulation of the body's processes and functioning. Making up more than half of our physiological structure, including: muscles, brain, bones and blood, and contributing to other functional components and processes, such as: joint and eye lubrication, skin health and digestion, understandably, it is important for us to maintain our hydration. If we are not adequately hydrated not only are these processes disrupted but our body struggles to maintain its optimal operating temperature of 36.8 degrees Celsius. Ultimately, recognising signs of dehydration is important, because if rehydration is delayed, more extensive dehydration and health consequences may

HOW MUCH WATER IS ENOUGH?

There are a number of different factors, such as: bodyweight, height, gender and physical activity levels, that are taken into account when determining how much water individuals should drink each day.

Average, daily water consumption for adult men and women is:



ARE YOU AWARE?

One fifth of the water our body needs is obtained from the foods we eat with the remainder from drinking fluids.



HAPPY HYDRATING

Despite being essential to our survival, water is a commonly disregarded factor in regards to our dietary wellbeing.

In Australia, approximately 80% of adults suffer from chronic dehydration, which can negatively affect the human body physically and psychologically.

We lose approximately 2 litres of water each day, through processes such as: urinary excretion, perspiration and breathing. Most foods we consume contain water, keeping a water bottle with you is a fantastic idea and even tea and coffee provides a source of additional fluid through the day.

If you are exposed to dehydrating environments or situations such as: aero planes, hot weather, illness, pregnancy, high intensity exercise, or high fiber or high protein diets, increased fluid consumption is advised. sed by a number of these factors working in combination.

NOT JUST A THIRST QUENCHER

50-80% of the human body is made up of water, and is a critical component in overall physiological and psychological functioning. This includes:

- Body temperature regulation
- · Moistening of the eyes, nose and mouth
- Hormone and neurotransmitter production
- Nutrient digestion and absorption
- · Bodily waste product removal
- Organ / tissue protection
- Oxygen transportation

DEHYDRATION



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RESTORING FLUIDS

Unfortunately, thirst is not an adequate indicator of the body's need for water. We often only feel thirsty once we are already dehydrated, as prior to that our body sends out hunger signals!

Water is the most effective option when it comes to staying hydrated, as it empties from the stomach quickly and is not a diuretic. Fruits and vegetables also have good fluid levels, with consumption promoting hydration. Chilled fluids are fine, however it is advised that water is not ice-cold.

This quenches thirst quicker, with less water consumed overall.

PERSPIRATION AND EVAPORATION

Maintaining fluid balance, or hydration, is an important factor in preserving various body functions and supporting physical performance. During exercise or work in hot or humid environments, fluids are lost mainly through perspiration (some lost through respiration), and unless you consume fluids to replace those lost, a fluid deficit will occur.

Hydration-specific drinks containing electrolytes may be useful during heavy exercise or strenuous work in warm temperatures due to their hydration-promoting properties, aiding replenishment of water and electrolytes lost through perspiration.

In general, men perspire more than women; even when performing the same level of activity, and researchers believe this is primarily because female bodies evaporate sweat on their skin more efficiently, thus cooling down the body without large amounts of perspiration. Weighing yourself before and immediately after exercise can help you to determine your sweat rate.

% BODY WEIGHT LOST THROUGH PERSPIRATION	PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECT
2%	Impaired thermo-regulatory ability, dizziness and pale lips
3%	Reduced muscle endurance and impaired performance
4 - 6 %	Reduced muscle strength and endurance
> 6 %	Severe heat cramp, heat exhaustion, coma and death

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NOT A FAN OF WATER?

To some, plain water can be uninspiring to drink and unappealing in taste, contributing to decreased intake and increased likelihood of dehydration.

Try these ideas to spice up your H2O:

- Add a squeeze of lemon or lime
- · Infuse with fruit (think berries, melon and citrus)
- Drop in some ice cubes
- Freshen up with mint or cucumber
- · Mix with sparkling water
- Add ice to refrigerated green or white tea to make it iced
- · Make soups with water-based broths

Other drinks including: energy drinks, juice, coconut water, coffee, tea and cordial should be consumed in moderation. Despite containing water, these fluid options commonly contain other components, such as: high sugar content, fat, salt and caffeine, which do not aid in hydration; and additionally contain calories.

EXERCISE

When undertaking any form of physical activity, exercise or physically demanding work, your water intake needs to increase in order to keep you adequately hydrated. It is advised to drink some water before, during and after exercise to replenish and repair the levels lost through perspiration:

- Drink 500mL 1 2 hours before exercising
- Sip another 250mL 15 minutes before you start
- Sip 200mL every 15 minutes

If you are working out for longer than 1 hour, consider if an electrolyte / hydration-specific drink may be beneficial to help replenish the electrolytes lost through activity. Consider weighing yourself prior to and after your

physical activity. For every 500g of weight lost, aim to drink 500mL of water.

Another effective way to monitor your hydration levels is to observe the colour of your urine. Particularly if it is dark in colour and infrequent, it is likely your are dehydrated and should increase your fluid intake.



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